

UAE expects its tough rules to check illegals

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The United Arab Emirates (UAE) said Sunday it expected tough new immigration laws to deter Asians and other foreigners from attempting to sneak into the oil-rich Gulf country in search of jobs.

Interior Ministry Under-Secretary Saqr Gobash said around 170,000 Indians and other Asians had left the UAE under an unprecedented amnesty for illegal migrants and that the local labour market was regaining discipline.

"Those people will now think twice before they try and come again illegally. The new laws will deter such attempts," Mr. Gobash told foreign journalists invited by the UAE to mark its 25th anniversary.

Mr. Gobash said many Asians had been killed or wounded trying to enter the UAE illegally by sea or through mountains in neighbouring Oman.

He said police and army helicopters had managed to rescue many others as they were about to drown or had fallen off rocks in the mountains.

"Most of the illegal migrants were from India, Iran, Pakistan and Bangladesh, which also account for the bulk of labour here," he said.

"They had come by sea. Some had landed on the UAE shores while others sneaked into the Omani mountains from Hormuz Strait."

He said new radar networks had been installed

along the long coastline, covering more than 90 per cent of the territorial waters.

Naval patrols have been intensified and helicopters were regularly monitoring the mountains.

Under the new immigration laws ratified by President Sheikh Zayed Ben Sultan Al Nahayan this year, aliens caught entering the country illegally would be jailed for three years and fined 30,000 dirhams (\$8,174). Those who help them are meted out more severe punishment, including a 15-year imprisonment and a fine of between 15,000 and 100,000 dirhams (\$4,087 to \$27,347).

Previous laws included only small fines and deportation of violators.

Embassy statistics showed expatriates from India and Bangladesh accounted for nearly half the illegal migrants who have left the UAE over the past four months to benefit from the amnesty. The rest were from Iran, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Afghanistan and the Philippines.

Thousands of others have also gone home after their residence expired while nearly 150,000 foreign workers have been allowed to stay after obtaining new sponsors, according to the labour ministry.

The seven Asian nationalities account for more than half the UAE's population of around 2.4 million and nearly two thirds of the workforce.

Labour Ministry Under-Secretary Mohammad Al Suweidi said those who had left had received all their dues from their former employers, including air tickets and end-of-service benefits.

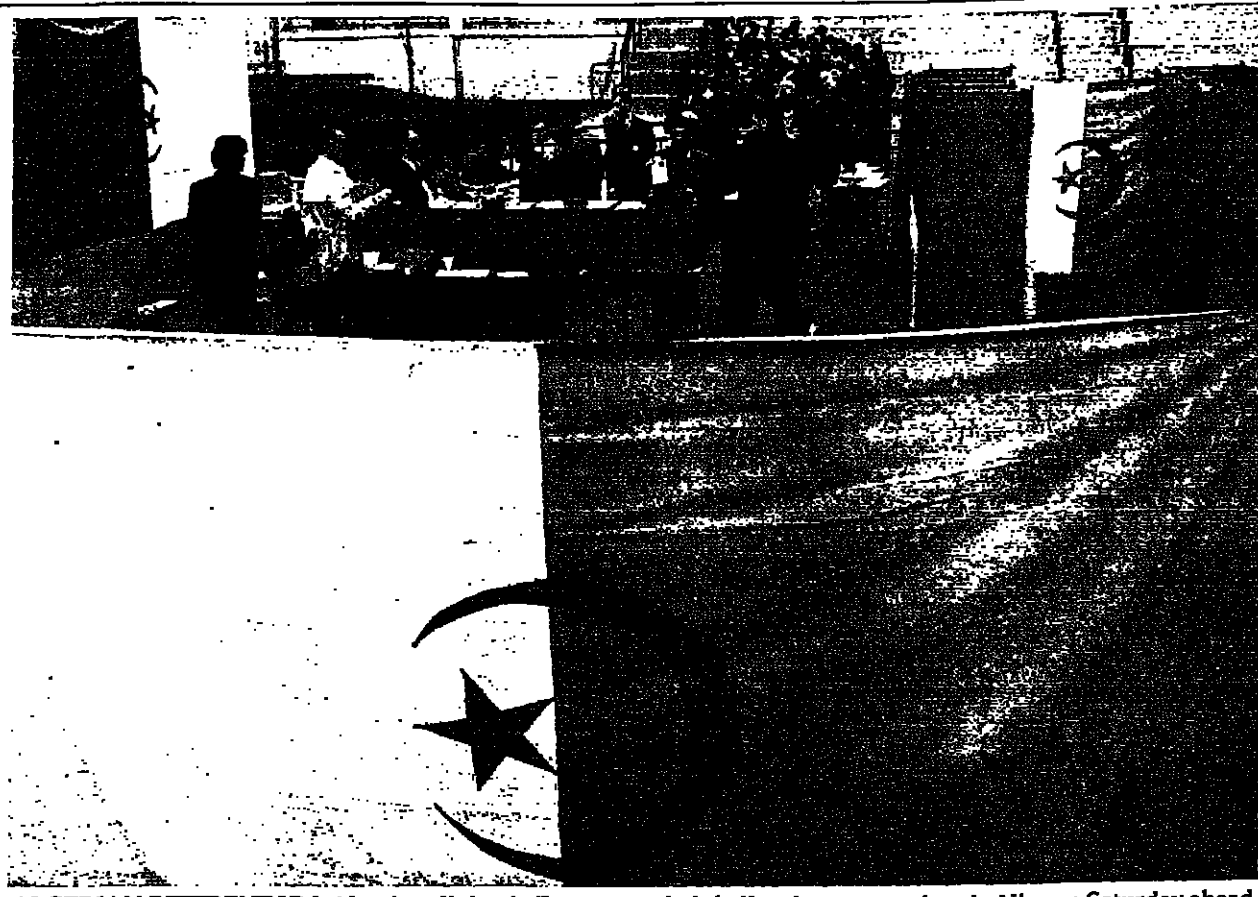
"The departure of those people had been arranged between them and their employers. So there will be an adverse impact on the economy but in the short term as they are allowed to come back through legal means," he said.

Apart from creating turmoil in the domestic labour market, the illegal immigration has given rise to crime and other negative phenomena, Mr. Gobash said.

He said illegal migrants had been unable to complain to authorities about abuse by their employers because they feared prosecution.

"Nor could they get proper health care as they do not have official documents proving they are residing legally in the country. All this has resulted in an illegal labour market and led to an increase in crime like burglary as well as begging and contagious diseases," he said.

"Many of them could not find jobs while others had seen their wages declining gradually. This prompted international drug gangs to target those people by seeking their help in smuggling narcotics into the UAE."



ALGERIAN REFERENDUM: Algerians living in France cast their ballots in a gymnasium in Nice on Saturday ahead of voting in Algeria itself on Nov. 28 in a referendum to change the country's constitution to bar religious groups from seeking power (Reuters photo)

Bahrain jails two dissidents

MANAMA (AP) — The state security court has sentenced two opposition activists to prison for trying to overthrow the government, the Gulf Daily News reported Sunday.

A third man, Hassan Mansoor Al Haiki, was sentenced to a three-month jail term for possessing "leaflets containing false information and propaganda aimed at destabilising Bahrain's security and stability," the paper said.

The English-language newspaper said the sentences were handed down Saturday.

The men convicted of trying to bring down the government were Abdul Rasool Ibrahim Hassan Mubarak, 37, who was sentenced to one year in prison, and Mohammad Ibrahim Ahmad Ibrahim Al Sheikh, 33, who was given a six-month term.

The government-guided paper said that both were found guilty of membership in a group "designed to change the country's political and social systems by the use of force, threats, violence and destruction."

All three men are believed to be members of Bahrain's Shiite Muslim sect.

The state security court was set up in March to deal with nearly two years of unrest by the Shiite opposition. The court, whose rulings cannot be appealed, has since convicted scores of activists. At least 30 people have been killed in the violence and hundreds detained or imprisoned.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Arafat meets Salvadorean leader

GAZA CITY (AFP) — Palestinian President Yasser Arafat on Sunday met El Salvador's Vice-President Enrique Borgo Bustamante to discuss the Middle East peace process. "We have succeeded in having a peace process (in El Salvador) and we hope the Palestinians will reach a peace soon," Mr. Bustamante told a joint press conference with Mr. Arafat, referring to the end of his own country's long civil war. Mr. Arafat said he discussed with Mr. Bustamante "the troubles facing the peace process and how to push it forward by any means" and thanked El Salvador for its support. Mr. Bustamante underlined that the presence of an embassy for his country in occupied Jerusalem did not affect Palestinian rights in the city. El Salvador is one of only a few nations with an embassy in the Holy City. The international community has never recognised Israel's "annexation" in 1967 of Arab East Jerusalem.

More Israelis avoid draft

TEL AVIV (AFP) — The number of Israelis refusing to serve in the army for religious reasons has grown sharply in recent months and the trend is expected to continue, the Haaretz newspaper reported Sunday. Ultra-orthodox Jews are exempt from mandatory military service in Israel and Haaretz quoted army officials as saying the number of Israelis using this reason to avoid the army rose 25 per cent this year and was forecast to grow another 15 per cent in 1997. In all, Israelis refusing their military service for religious reasons represented 4.9 per cent of all draftees in 1995 and 6.1 per cent in 1996 and the total is expected to rise to seven per cent in 1997, the army spokesman was quoted as saying. Analysts linked the phenomena to the growing number of Israelis who send their children to private schools run by religious organisations. Some 165,000 students are enrolled in schools run by the three main Israeli religious parties, including 85,000 18-year-olds who would normally be preparing to join the army.

Frogmen in Iran war games

TEHRAN (R) — Iranian frogmen carried out helicopter operations and troops took part in defence against chemical bombardment in war games in the Gulf, the country's official news agency IRNA reported Sunday. The agency, reporting from Bandar Abbas port overlooking the strategic Strait of Hormuz, said joint navy and Revolutionary Guard forces also halted a hypothetical enemy advance and penetrated enemy positions in the exercises on Saturday. Iran launched 10 days of war games in the Gulf and the Gulf of Oman on Thursday involving more than 100 ships including destroyers, gunboats, hovercraft, supply ships and submarines supported by 40 fixed-wing aircraft and helicopters. IRNA said the purpose of exercise "Pirooz (victory)-7" was to enhance the combat readiness of the Iranian armed forces. It quoted a spokesman for the operational commander of the war games and deputy coordinator of Khatam Ul Anbia naval headquarters, Rear-Admiral Ashkhou Danekar, as saying the second stage of the exercises would be launched on Sunday.

Greek caught in Beirut with heroin

BEIRUT (AFP) — An elderly Greek national was arrested by customs officers at Beirut international airport for smuggling one kilogramme of heroin, the official news agency ANI reported Saturday. The 72-year-old man was discovered at the airport Friday with the heroin packed in 10 nylon bags hidden in his briefcase, the agency said, adding that he was on his way to Brussels via Amsterdam. Customs sources estimated that one kilogramme of heroin could fetch around 50,000 dollars overseas, the agency reported.

Vatican discusses naming envoy to Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY (AFP) — The Vatican's foreign minister, Monsignor Jean-Louis Tauran, discussed appointing a permanent papal representative to Kuwait during talks with officials here Sunday.

Monsignor Tauran, the first senior diplomat from the Holy See to visit Kuwait for more than 25 years, said such an appointment was "mentioned" but remains an "open issue" because of a shortage of clergy who could fill the post.

"We have always thought it would be convenient to have a residing nuncio (Vatican envoy) here," he told reporters.

It would be the first time a nuncio is named to one of the six Gulf Arab states and he said any appointment would be made in line with the diplomatic ties the Vatican established with Kuwait in 1969.

No such relations exist with the other Gulf states.

Religious freedoms

At present, two ambassadors based in Lebanon and France are concerned with the Kuwaiti Roman Catholic community of about 100,000 people.

Kuwait, a Muslim country where Christians are free to worship, has an active Roman Catholic community made up of expatriates, mainly from India and the Philippines, "being and working in Kuwait."

"The religious freedom (enforced) by the Kuwaiti law is essential for every civil society, because it is a fundamental right," Monsignor Tauran said.

"It is very important that people who live in a country feel they are respected for their beliefs," he added.

During his visit, Monsignor Tauran handed a letter from Pope John Paul II to the emir, Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah, and also met Crown Prince and Prime Minister Sheikh Saad Al Abdullah Al Sabah and other government ministers.

Monsignor Tauran said he had visited two other Gulf states, the United Arab Emirates and Oman, two years ago.

Greek defence minister assures Cyprus of increased military aid

NICOSIA (AP) — Greek Defence Minister Kostas Tsouzopoulos said Sunday that his government and Cyprus will continue to strengthen their joint defence pact as a deterrent to perceived Turkish threats.

"This is our response to Turkish expansionism and threats," he told a news conference at the end of a four-day visit.

He stressed that the joint defence pact established between the two countries three years ago "is of a purely defensive nature whose primary objective is to facilitate the peaceful settlement of the problem."

Cyprus has been partitioned into a Greek Cypriot-controlled south and a Turkish-occupied north since 1974, when Turkey invaded in response to an abortive coup by Cypriot supporters of union with Greece. A breakaway Turkish Cypriot government established in the north is recognised only by Turkey.

Mr. Tsouzopoulos reiterated that any military advance by Turkey in Cyprus would be regarded as a cause for war by Greece, which will come to the aid of the Greek Cypriots.

The Greek defence minister declined to reveal details of his discussions with his Cypriot counterpart, Costas Eliades.

But Cypriot sources said they concentrated on making up for the Greek Cypriots' lack of air power through completion of a military air base at Paphos on the western coast. The base could be used by Greek air force planes. The sources insisted on anonymity.

While Turkish warplanes can reach the island from mainland bases in a few minutes, Greek jets from the nearest bases on the islands of Rhodes and Crete would need about one hour. They then would have little fuel left for flying over Cyprus.

The sources said Mr. Tsouzopoulos' talks also dealt with strengthening the island's anti-aircraft missile system through the purchase of Russian equipment and the recruitment of Greek specialists by the Cypriot armed forces to man sophisticated weapon systems.

Turkey has objected to the joint defence pact ever since its inception in October 1993, saying it fears the agreement could lay the groundwork for an attack on the Turkish Cypriots.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Deserts08/21
Jordan Valley16/27
Yesterday's high temperatures:
Amman 20, Aqaba 30 Humidity readings: Amman 65 per cent, Aqaba 38 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Wissam Hazyin748563
Dr. Mukhlis Mazabrah820425
Dr. Abdul Hadi Tayyib620115
Dr. Munthir Al Qaini779959
Ferdows pharmacy778336
Al Asema pharmacy637055
Nairookh pharmacy623672
Al Salam pharmacy636730
Yacoub pharmacy644945
Shmeisani pharmacy637660
Nairookh pharmacy847632
IRBID:
Dr. Mazin Abu Bakr76852
Al Quds pharmacy(—)
ZARQA:
Dr. Ziyad Jghaitim992991
Khalifeh pharmacy985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre637111
Civil Defence Department661111
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue630341

Civil Defence Emergency199
Rescue Police192 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade617101
Blood Bank775121
Highway Police843402
Traffic Police896390
Public Security Dept.630321
Hotel Complaints605800
Price Complaints661176
Water & Sewerage Complaints897467
Amman Municipality Complaints787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance)121
Overseas Calls010230
Central Amman Telephone Repairs623101
Abdali Tel. Repairs661101
Jordan Television773111
Radio Jordan774111
Water Authority680100
J. Electricity Authority815615
Electric Power Co.636381
RJ Flight Information08-53200
Queen Alia Int. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITAL

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre81381332
Khalid Maternity6442816
Akileh Maternity6424412
Jabal Amman Maternity642362
Malhas, J. Amman636140
Palestine, Shmeisani607071
Shmeisani Hospital669131
University Hospital845845
Al-Musaher Hospital6672279
The Islamic, Abdali66612637
Al-Ahli, Abdali6641646
Italian, Al-Muhajreen777101/3

FOR THE TRAVELLER QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53200-5, where it should always be verified. Information on other flights are supplied on phone 08 (52700)

ARRIVALS	
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights	
07:15Sanaa (RJ)	
08:35Jeddah (RJ)	
08:55Damascus (RJ)	
09:45New Delhi (RJ)	
09:50Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)	
10:05Beirut (RJ)	
16:05Kuala Lumpur (add)	
16:20Cairo (RJ)	
17:35London, Amsterdam (RJ)	
19:25Malta (RJ)	
21:15Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur (RJ)	
22:20Casablanca (RJ)	
23:15Jeddah (add) (RJ)	
03:15Khartoum (add) (RJ)	
03:40Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur (RJ)	
Other Flights	
05:00Khartoum (SD)	
09:30Cairo (MS)	
11:30Doha (Q7)	
12:40Bahrain (GF)	
15:05Vienna (OS)	
21:00Paris, Damascus (AF)	
21:40Tel Aviv (LY)	
22:45Athens, Beirut (OA)	
00:30London (BA)	
01:20Amsterdam, Damascus (KL)	
DEPARTURES	
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights	
09:20Aqaba (RW)	
20:50Aqaba (RW)	

06:20Beirut (RJ)	Dep. Damascus7:30 a.m. every Sunday
09:50Casablanca (RJ)	Art. Amman5:00 p.m. every Sunday
11:00Amsterdam, Chicago (RJ)	
12:00Malta (add) (RJ)	
12:15Cairo (RJ)	
12:15London (RJ)	
12:30Frankfurt (RJ)	
13:30Jeddah (add) (RJ)	
20:00Abu Dhabi, Singapore (add) (RJ)	
20:15Bahrain, Doha (RJ)	
20:25Khartoum (add) (RJ)	
21:15Dubai, Muscat (RJ)	
22:45Sanaa (RJ)	
23:00Damascus (RJ)	
23:30Abu Dhabi (RJ)	
Other Flights	
06:30Khartoum (SD)	
07:35Beirut, London (BA)	
07:45Beirut (ME)	
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13:30Bahrain (GF)	
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23:55Damascus, Paris (AF)	
02:30Amsterdam (KL)	
03:00Beirut, Athens (OA)	
07:35Damascus, London (BA)	
HIJAZ RAILWAY TRAIN	
Royal Wings (RW) Flights	
09:50Marka Airport (from QAIA)	
Dep. Amman8:00 a.m. every Monday	
Art. Damascus5:00 p.m. every Monday	

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fils per kg.	
Apple.....	700/550
Banana.....	550/550
Banana (imported).....	700/500
Cabbage.....	100/40
Carrot.....	280/150
Cauliflower.....	170/140
Cucumber (large).....	120/70
Cucumber (small).....	200/100
Eggplant.....	130/70
Garlic.....	750/550
Grapes.....	350/300
Lemon.....	350/180
Marrow (large).....	120/100
Marrow (small).....	170/150
Onion (green).....	220/150
Onion (dry).....	150/80
Orange.....	580/300
Pear.....	630/450
Pepper (hot).....	240/180
Pepper (sweet).....	180/120
Potato.....	330/180
Spinach.....	240/100
String Bean.....	420/300
Tomato.....	230/150

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

14:05Muppet Show
14:30Comedy — Dad's Army
15:00Varieties — L'Intégrale
15:30Doc. — Travelling Gourmet
16:00Documentary
16:30Comedy — Hey Dad
17:00News Flash
17:01Destiny Ridge
18:00Magazine — Cinq Sur Cinq
19:00Le Journal
19:15Magazine — Cinq Sur Cinq
19:30News Headlines
19:35Rosanne
20:00Documentary — Disaster Chronicle
20:30Cinema, Cinema
21:10The Lazarus Man
22:00News in English
22:25Best Seller — Zoya
23:15Bodies of Evidence

PRAYER TIMES

04:47Fajr
07:08(Sunrise) Duha
11:22Dhuhr
14:13Asr
16:37Maghreb
17:57Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Sweifiah, Tel. 810740

Assemblies of God Church Tel.

632785.
St. Joseph Church Tel. 634590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440.
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757.
Terra Sancta Church Tel. 622366
Anglican Church Tel. 652826.
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331.
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261.
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751.
Amman International Church Tel. 827126
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328.
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 845457.
The Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932.
Church of Nazarene Tel. 675691.
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295
English-speaking Latin Catholics Parish Tel. 614190.

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology. Skies will be partly cloudy with a chance for scattered showers, particularly in the southern parts of the Kingdom, and winds southeasterly moderate. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

Min/Max. temp.

Amman.....09/19
Aqaba.....17/28

number 25, 1996
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PRICES
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Princess attends ceremony to honour JNCRS heads

SALT (Petra) — HRH Princess Sarvath Al Hassan Sunday attended a ceremony to honour a number of individuals who have served at the head of the Salt branch of the Jordanian National Red Crescent Society (JNCRS), established in 1952.

At the opening of the ceremony, JNCRS Executive President Mohammad Hadid welcomed the Princess and paid tribute to her contributions and continued support for the society and its charitable programmes.

He also expressed gratitude to Princess Sarvath, also the honorary Vice-President of the JNCRS, for her generous donation which financed the maintenance and restoration of the Prince Abdullah Ibn Al Hussein Orphanage which is operated by the society in Salt.



HRH Princess Sarvath Al Hassan Sunday attends ceremony to honour individuals who have served as heads of the Salt branch of the Jordanian National Red Crescent Society (Petra photo)

Sheikh Amin Zeid Kilani, head of the society's Salt branch, outlined the various programmes and activities undertaken by the society in the Salt area, paying tribute to the Hashemite leadership for their ongoing efforts to support those in need and encourage various institutions to contribute to charitable and voluntary organisations.

He also stated his appreciation to all donors who have heretofore enabled the society to maintain its services and care for orphaned children.

The Princess inspected the orphanage, restoration work and the refurbishing process which she financed

in a JD 9,000 donation.

Princess Sarvath also inspected the activities and services accorded to the 20 orphaned girls.

Later, the Princess distributed the JNCRS symbol to veteran workers and heads of the Salt society.

The orphanage, which was established in 1962, cares for orphaned children through the provision of education and care funded by philanthropists.

Since its establishment the orphanage has cared for 150 children.

Mendicant sentenced to two weeks jail time

AMMAN (J.T.) — A 60-year old man, who was arrested for begging last week in Irbid, was sentenced to two weeks in jail last Wednesday, Director of the Irbid Ministry of Social Affairs office, Salman Abanda told the Jordan Times.

Na'ef Mohammed Saker, a resident of the refugee camp in Irbid was apprehended last week, during a regular police raid, in possession of JD1,538 in cash and holding a bank account reportedly worth JD 40,000.

The court can legally jail mendicants for a period of three months and in the case of repeat offenders they can sentence them for up to three years in rehabilitation centres as well as confiscate their assets.

Mr. Saker had been apprehended several times before, Mr. Abanda said yet the court gave him a minimum sentence and did not make moves to confiscate the money.

He will be released in two weeks time, Mr. Abanda told the Jordan Times.

Uzbekistan, Jordan conclude air transport agreement



Uzbekistani Foreign Minister Abdul Aziz Kamalov and Minister of Transport Naser Lawzi sign an air transport agreement Sunday (Petra photo)

AMMAN (Petra) — Uzbekistan and Jordan Sunday concluded an agreement regarding the organisation of air transport with a view to further promote economic, cultural and trade links between the two countries.

The agreement, which was signed by Minister of Transport Naser Lawzi and the Uzbekistani Foreign Minister Abdul Aziz Kamalov,

provides for organising flights between Amman and Uzbekistan through a third country.

The agreement also provides for organising regular flights by tourist groups and visitor facilities from either country to the other.

Earlier, the Uzbekistan minister and Minister of Industry and Trade Ali Abul Ragheb signed a trade agreement paving the way for mutual trade

exchanges.

Mr. Abul Ragheb said that Uzbekistan holds great opportunities for Jordanian exports and entrepreneurs to launch joint ventures with their colleagues from Uzbekistan.

Kamalov said that he hoped the agreement would mark the start of fruitful relationship between his country and the Kingdom.

Slated university road fodder for dispute

Nadia Mukhlis
Special to the Jordan Times

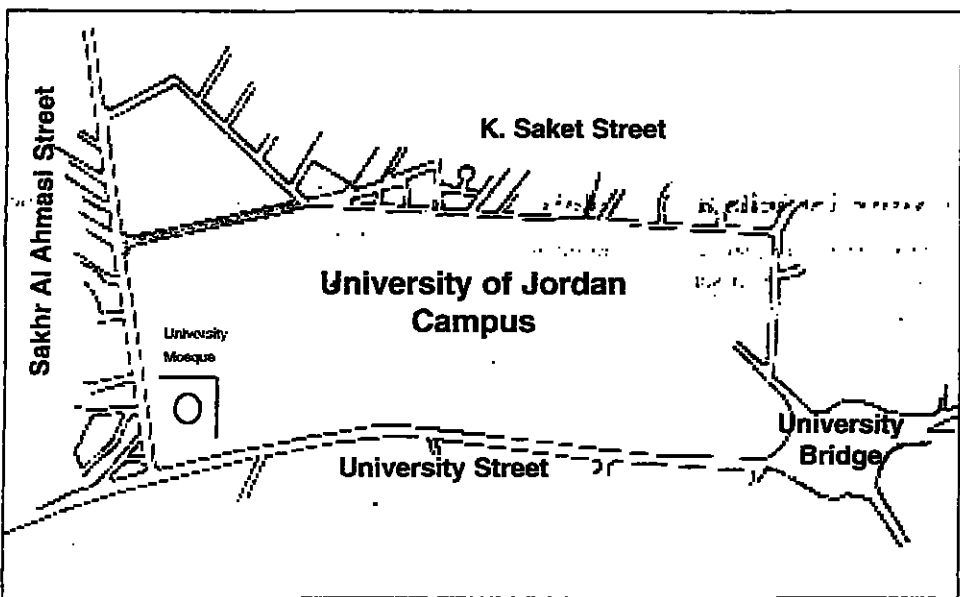
AMMAN — A road projected to cut through the northern part of the University of Jordan has generated "mixed" reactions from community leaders and university officials.

Greater Amman Municipal Council Official Omar Lawzi said that studies are underway to construct a service road which connects the streets Sakher Al Ahmasy with Khalil Al Sakit (see map).

The road's construction was proposed in order to minimise traffic congestion in the area, Mr. Lawzi said.

He said the road will not link with any roads inside the campus and will measure 490 metres in length and 20 metres in width, including overhead pedestrian crossings, and controlled by two traffic lights at its end points.

Asked for the motive behind this project, Mr. Lawzi said that Jubaiha, which has a



Map of the University of Jordan and surrounding areas. The shaded part represents the debated road.

population of 55,000 and an additional 10,000 daily commuters, suffers from three major gridlock points, one near the university mosque, the second near the main gate on Al Ahmasy road and the third near the University School.

When queried about possible alternatives, Mr. Lawzi said that the road was the least costly option and that the possibility of an

underpass was excluded due to high expense.

Mr. Lawzi further stated that the Municipality of Amman will be the only financier of the project.

University of Jordan Vice-President of Directorial Affairs Walid Ma'ani maintained that the project has been under review for the past four years and that the university and the Municipality

of Amman are cooperating on the project to solve traffic jams in the area.

Dr. Ma'ani said that the road would not interfere with the university campus life and that it cuts through administrative buildings far from lecture classes.

Officials at the university's engineering department, however, had reservations regarding the project.

An official, who requested anonymity, said that he believed the road would ruin the unity of the campus and would affect the green area inside the campus, where trees would have to be cut down.

He also felt that the road would be a source of noise and pollution.

Campus professors felt that such a project should be thoroughly studied, "taking into consideration the road's potential effect on academic life as well as its effect on the green area and the possible augmentation of pollution and noise disturbances."

Studies are still under way and no final decision has been taken yet, however, Mr. Lawzi told the Jordan Times that, if approved, the road will take one month to construct.

Family fears abduction of eight-year old girl

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The family of an eight-year-old girl has alleged that she was kept in a "nursing home" in the Turkish Embassy for one month, pending a court ruling on custody rights, and now say that they fear the child may have been taken out of the country.

Abdullah Shawawarah, the uncle of Amal Shawawarah, the eight-year old child, said that his niece and her mother, a Turkish national, were picked up by Turkish Embassy officials a month ago from their Ei' home, near Karak, and "since then we haven't heard anything neither from her nor her mother."

Turkish officials told us that they were keeping Amal for ten days, but it now it has been more than a month and we have not been allowed to meet her," Mr. Shawawarah charged.

He said that although they received a guarantee from Turkish officials that she was not going to be sent back to Turkey, "we fear that she might have been smuggled out of the country as we do not know anything about her."

"We've been trying in vain to contact officials at the embassy in order to meet with Amal and to take her to school but we haven't received any answer yet," he said.

Several attempts by the Jordan Times to obtain a statement from the Turkish Embassy have all failed.

An official at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, however, said the case was in the hands of the judiciary which will determine who will win custody rights.

"Jordanians are guaranteed full rights, and in this case we will have to wait for court to determine the final verdict," the official source said, referring to a lawsuit instigated by the Shawawarah family.

According to Mr. Shawawarah, Amal's father, Ali Shawawarah, married Artin Ardani in 1984 after studying in Turkey in the late 1970's.

"But Ali left his wife and daughter in Turkey, returned to Jordan and married another woman," he said.

A few months later, he said, Ali, an engineer, was killed in a road accident and his family contacted his wife in Turkey and asked her to come to Jordan to claim inheritance and "settle Amal's custody issue."

The mother arrived with her daughter, and stayed in Ei' for four months, "but she changed her mind in July, and decided to take Amal back to Turkey."

The Shawawarah family opposed the idea as they wanted the child to stay with them, Mr. Shawawarah told the Jordan Times.

But Ms. Ardani's father complained to the Turkish Embassy last month that the Shawawarah's were detaining his daughter and granddaughter.

"We were accused by [the Ardani family] of abducting and detaining the girl and [they claimed that] we were asking for money in return for the child," he added.

"These are false and unjust accusations. How can a family ask for money in return for their daughter?" he queried.

WHAT'S GOING ON

FILM

* "Chère Inconnue" at the French Cultural Centre at 8:30 p.m.

LECTURE

* "The Palestinian-Israeli Relationship in the Presence of the Likud" by Hussein Hijazi at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation, Jabal Amman at 6:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

* Photography exhibition by Lily Bandak entitled "Images of the Arab World" at the Jordanian Construction Contractors Association, exhibition hall, Sweifeh, until January 1.

* Works by Arab artists residing in Spain Zafar Adnan, Issam Ta'i, and Hakan Sa'di at Orfali Art Gallery, Umm Uttheina, until Dec. 3.

* Works by Jalal Ariqat and Larisa Najar at Instituto Cervantes, Jabal Amman, until Dec. 6.

* Retrospective exhibition by Berlin-based Syrian artist Marwan Kassab-Bachi at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh, until Dec. 10. Also displaying works of contemporary Arab artists.

* Works by Syrian artist Mustafa Ali at Balladna Art Gallery, Gardens St. until Nov. 30.

* Aspects from the modern Jordanian plastic art by several Jordanian artists entitled "Message" at Alia Art Gallery, Jabal Amman, until Nov. 28.

* Photo panels and mosaics exhibition by German artist Yona Joest entitled "Petra — A Cosmological Dialogue" at the Royal Cultural Centre, until Nov. 30.

* Works by twenty four artists (from Iraq, Holland, Lebanon, Vietnam, Spain, Greece, Curacao, Indonesia, Russia, and Chile) entitled "Hond and Hamer" at the Royal Society of Fine Art, Jabal Weibdeh until Nov. 30.

* Photo exhibition by Basma Asfour entitled "Doubles Regards" at the French Cultural Centre, until Nov. 28.

Internet message stimulates aid to charitable home

By Sacha Baggili
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A message sent by school pupil Candide Kirk onto the local Internet, "a request to all people living in Jordan to do whatever is within their means to help these poor people" five pledges of aid were made.

An extremely pleasing reply received by Candide from a man, wishing to remain anonymous, read, "My wife and I will pay the fuel bills for Dar El-Salaam for winter of this year...we will make arrangements for a fuel service to visit the house regularly. Thanks for showing concern and my compliments to you for visiting Dar El-Salaam and bringing this issue to our attention."

According to the Teresan nuns, the public has "shown great generosity" since the home was opened 27 years ago, bringing food and money to their door and the sisters further expressed appreciation for the assistance received from organi-

medical costs, "especially sedative drugs, needed by the majority of patients."

Within 10 days of Ms. Kirk's entry on the Internet, "a request to all people living in Jordan to do whatever is within their means to help these poor people" five pledges of aid were made.

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sations such as the British Ladies of Amman.

However, as pointed out by Ms. Kirk, a fifteen-year old student, winter is the most difficult period for Dar El-Salaam, and "greater awareness amongst the general public" could generate further interest in the work of the Teresan nuns, increase willingness to donate and therefore help alleviate hardships facing the home.

As the cost of fuel, electricity and water has been continuously rising the nuns recently resorted to requesting exemption from water and electricity bills.

That petition to the authorities was unsuccessful but as the anonymous donor of fuel costs told the Jordan Times, exemption from bill payment would necessitate approval by the council of ministers as this is considered money pertaining to the country.

The government cannot appear to be "favouring one philanthropic group over another" he said.

The six nuns at Dar El-Salaam, one of the 14 Middle Eastern houses founded by Sister Teresa's order, comfort, bathe, clean and cook for their patients as well as manage administrative business without any official assistance.

In response to a suggestion that the home would be helped by people willing to dedicate time and practical assistance as well as money, Sister Julie agreed, adding, "The patients get great pleasure from the company of visitors, they love to talk to people."

Although visits by students have been organised through schools, colleges and universities, assistance of this nature is irregular.

The Dar El-Salaam building consists of a dormitory split into three sections, a kitchen, refractory and a small garden.

The home also has access to a bus which is occasionally used for trips to the second Teresan home located near Zarqa and housing

handicapped children.

However, such trips are difficult to organise and "the many bed-bound patients miss out on such pleasures," Sister Julie told the Jordan Times.

The nuns insisted that they did not wish people to feel forced to donate but want them "only to give from their hearts."

With regard to Ms. Kirk's hopes for the next few months, she told the Jordan Times that she hoped enough interest could be generated to ensure a happier time for the residents of Dar El-Salaam over the Christmas season and perhaps "a Christmas dinner could be organised."

Ms. Kirk's mother Samia Mondo told the Jordan Times that as food donations are sporadic, (usually leftovers from weddings and funerals) she hopes that a mechanism for regular transport of leftovers, still fit for consumption, can be established.

Save water ... every drop counts

No room for Imelda Marcos in 'Trianon' she built

"I think it went very well. It was a good meeting, and I think the next steps are appropriate." Mr. Clinton said.

Satellites line up behind shuttle

CAPE CANAVERAL, Florida (R) — Shuttle Columbia led a procession of satellites around the globe Saturday as a prototype space factory and an ultraviolet observatory followed it through space.

The wake shield facility released Friday night and the Orfeus-Spas Orbiting Observatory deployed last Tuesday will be retrieved by Columbia's crew later in their 16-day mission.

"That's certainly a beautiful dance out there with three orbiting bodies," spacecraft communicator Bill McArthur told the shuttle crew Saturday. It is the first time the shuttle has orbited along with two recoverable satel-

"It's a very sophisticated ballet we're doing here," flight Director Al Pennington said. "The dynamics of the three-body problem is

The wake shield, a prototype space-based semiconductor factory, had already given the astronauts a scare when it passed close by the shuttle's cockpit minutes

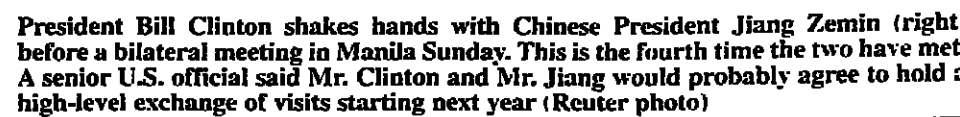
The saucer-shaped craft was supposed to have been 7.3 metres from the shuttle but may have come as close as three metres, shuttle Commander Ken Cockrell said.

The astronauts were never in danger because Cockrell could have fired the shuttle's thrusters to take evasive action had a collision looked imminent, NASA officials said. But that would have contaminated the sensitive space-

When the astronauts awoke Saturday, Columbia was 29 kilometres ahead of the wake shield, which was followed 85 kilometres further back by the Orfeus-Space Laboratory.

Controllers operating the two-tonne wake shield reported no repeat of the problems with the spacecraft's stabilising system that had caused it to wobble through space during a test flight last year.

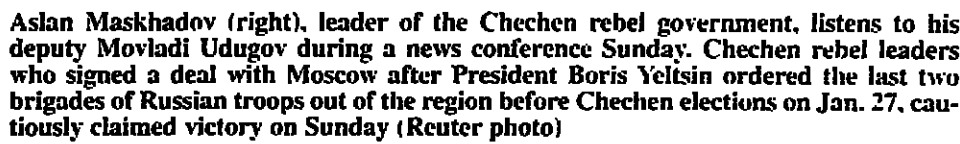
"Fortunately ... the wake shield is not reeling and rocking," joked mission control's McArthur after waking the crew Saturday Afternoon with a recording of Chuck Berry's "Reeling And Rocking."



MANILA (R) — Imelda Marcos, who once made generals and tycoons quake in their boots, sits on the sidelines all but forgotten as world leaders meet and dine in a glittering Philippine convention center she built.

As U.S. President Bill Clinton and other APEC heads of state gathered in Manila Sunday ahead of their annual summit, the woman known around the world for her collection of 3,000 shoes spent her morning quietly in an old house in Manila where her late husband Ferdinand Marcos brought her as his bride 42 years ago.

Mr. Mandela told the Sunday Independent that the issue will not affect South Africa's friendship with the U.S.



was not at all bitter that hardly anyone remembers it was she who built the convention centre complex.

President Fidel Ramos Sunday evening hosted a dinner at the complex for leaders attending the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit.

"I am very happy that I have contributed a little to such a gathering," Mrs. Marcos said in a statement to Reuters.

"She doesn't miss the glory at all," spokeswoman Sol Vanzani said.

While Mr. Clinton made a state arrival in Manila Saturday night, Mrs. Marcos

He added that the Constitutional Court and parliament should review the agreement, which he said "smells of a Belovezh mark 2," referring to the treaty signed by Mr. Yeltsin and other leaders in December 1991, which formed the basis

Another accord on "special economic relations" between Moscow and Chechnya was to be worked out after the poll.

pendence before Moscow's 1994 assault. Although no longer a significant oil producer, the region occupies a strategic position between the rest of Russia and the oil-rich Caspian state of Azerbaijan.

Mr. Vanzi did not explain why Mrs. Marcos, who lives in a luxury apartment with a lavish collection of art on its walls and has a large retinue, should be out buying her own fruit in a public market late at night.

"It's a Greek tragedy," political analyst Teodoro Benigno said.

The convention complex boasts an international hotel, a concert hall, a film centre and a theatre that hosted a Miss Universe pageant.

Ms. Marcos ordered the

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And Rocking."

students.

complex built in 1976 for the annual meeting of the International Monetary Fund that her husband hosted as part of a campaign to hide the harshness of his martial law regime behind a diplomatic facade, political foes said.

The impressive buildings sprouted while much of the country wallowed in poverty. But the Marcoses were at the height of their power then and no one dared question their wisdom.

Imelda Marcos exercised so much behind-the-scenes

power even generals and industrial magnates trembled in her presence, presidential palace insiders said.

She now faces a long jail term over allegations of corruption arising from her husband's 20-year rule.

The Marcoses were over-

thrown in a 1986 popular uprising fuelled partly by disgust at Imelda's extravagance, especially on what Filipinos still regard as overseas shopping sprees of almost mythic proportions. Aides said Mrs. Marcos, now a congresswoman despite the ban on her political activities, was the

"But she did not want to be seen as riding on the apocryphal story that she declined the in-

Analyst Benigno said the convention centre was like the Trianon, a small palace besides the splendour of Versailles, which French King Louis XVI built "as a playpen for Marie Antoinette."

"In a very ironic sense, while the convention centre was built maybe to satisfy

her (Mrs. Marcos's) caprice or whim to build monuments to herself, now it is serving a purpose. People now realise it has a value after all."

[illegible][illegible]



Irene Skliwa (centre) of Greece smiles while she is being crowned as Miss World 1996 by the outgoing winner Jacqueline Aguilera of Venezuela in southern Indian city of Bangalore late Saturday. Also seen in the picture are second runner up Anuska Prada (left) of Brazil and first runner up Carolina Arango (right) of Colombia (Reuters photo)

Relief as Miss World pageant ends in India

BANGALORE, India (R) — With the crowning of a Greek model as Miss World, contestants in the controversial pageant prepared Sunday to depart and police expressed relief that militant feminists did not carry out self-immolation protests.

Police said they would probably release Sunday more than 1,500 demonstrators who had been detained as a precaution before Saturday night's finale of the pageant, which had drawn protests for two months from opponents who said it demeaned women and Indian culture.

There were no mass suicides as threatened by militant pageant protesters. And the one woman who said she could make them happen — Kinay Narayana Shashikala, leader of Mahila Jagran Samiti (Forum for Awakening Women) — was nowhere to be seen.

"We are relieved that it's over," said a senior police officer. "Now she (Shashikala) is free to do whatever she wants."

Irene Skliwa, a hazel-eyed, 18-year-old professional model from Greece, was crowned Miss World in the glittering, heavily guarded finale, viewed by a worldwide television audience of two billion.

Police said the detained protesters would probably



Miss World 1996 Irene Skliwa of Greece gestures in traditional Indian style of greeting during a press conference in the southern Indian city of Bangalore Sunday. This was Ms. Skliwa's first press conference after being crowned Miss World 1996 during the pageant which attracted participants from 89 countries. The pageant, held first time in India, ended amidst protests in the city (Reuters photo)

be freed after the Miss World contestants left for New Delhi, India's capital.

On Saturday 10,000 police and paramilitary troops fired teargas on crowds

in Bangalore's streets where right-wing Hindu nationalists staged demonstrations before the pageant started.

At least seven police were injured in scattered clashes throughout the city.

But inside the fortress-like cricket stadium, the three-hour spectacle passed off without incident to traditional Indian music and dance.

Carolina Arango, 19, of Colombia was named first runner-up, and Anuska Prada, 20, of Brazil the second runner-up.

Militant feminists had vowed to penetrate the stadium's security and swallow cyanide as they set themselves on fire, but the feminist group was nowhere in sight.

Last week, an unemployed man in southern India died after setting himself ablaze in protest.

The beauty contest itself tried to be a tribute to Indian culture, set against the backdrop of reconstructed ruins of a 14th-century Hindu temple.

In deference to Indian mores, the contestants wore long transparent skirts around their swimsuits.

Police said three members of parliament from New Delhi belonging to the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party were among those held in the protests, which had heavy political overtones.

120 dead but more than 50 survive crash of hijacked plane

MORONI (AFP) — More than 50 passengers and crew escaped alive from a hijacked Ethiopian airliner, carrying 175 people, that crashed into the Indian Ocean off the Comoros Islands.

Rescuers scrambled Sunday to look for more miracle survivors from the Ethiopian Airlines Boeing 767 that came down on a reef off the tiny island group, apparently after running out of fuel as it was trying to land, witnesses said.

Bodies were seen floating in the waters off the tourist islands, mingling with the wreckage.

The crisis cell at the Comoros Foreign Ministry said that 120 bodies had been plucked from the water and gave a revised figure for the number of people on board as 163 passengers and 12 crew.

The ministry said that the hijackers, "probably Ethiopians ... got into the plane at Addis Ababa, entered the cockpit and threatened to blow up the plane."

In Addis Ababa, an Ethiopian airline official said the hijackers had been "trying to get in touch with the Ethiopian government, the plane was turning around in the middle of the ocean until there was no fuel."

Frederick Chretien, the

manager of the Galawa Hotel near the crash scene, quoted survivors as saying that the hijackers "were quite panicky."

Ibrahim Moussa, a Comoros government official, said the captain, copilot, two stewardesses and a technician from the plane were among the 52 survivors counted so far.

Two hijackers were also among the survivors and they had been formally identified by the surviving crew, he said.

The hijacking appeared set to become the bloodiest in history, exceeding the death toll in the December 1977 hijacking of a Malaysian airliner, in which 93 passengers and seven crew died.

The reason for the hijacking remained a mystery, Israeli radio reported earlier that 11 hijackers had seized the plane and ordered it to fly to Mauritius and then on to Australia.

Divers and boat owners helped in the rescue operation, while police and explosives teams looked for any trace of explosives in the sea or on the beach.

A private Comoran pilot told AFP after visiting the site about 40 kilometres from Moroni that the plane had broken into three pieces and was floating just off the beach.

He said part of the fuselage and the tail section bearing the colours of the Ethiopian flag were clearly visible in the water.

An Ethiopian medical team arrived at the crash site Saturday evening, the Comoros Foreign Ministry said, while the French Foreign Ministry said a French Red Cross team had come from the island of Reunion.

Israeli and U.S. officials were also due to head for the islands to help in the rescue and investigations.

"Since there were Americans on board ... it appears to be an act of air piracy ... and a crime under U.S. law," State Department spokesman Christopher Bush said in Washington.

The Comoros Foreign Ministry said that a U.S. diplomat and his wife were among the survivors, but Mr. Bush said he could only confirm that "several Americans were on board."

No full passenger list has been released, but a partial list of survivors gave the figures as: Three Americans, two Britons, two French, three Italians, one Japanese, one Ukrainian, one Israeli, four Nigerians, two Congolese, one Djiboutian, eight Ethiopians, four Kenyans, two Malians and one Indian.

The Israeli Foreign Minis-

try said earlier that eight Israelis had been on board.

South Korean diplomat Lee Jong-Hun, a third secretary at the embassy in Nairobi, was among the dead, according to the Foreign Ministry in Seoul.

Takahiko Sugiyama, 56, an official of the government-run Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), was among survivors in hospital in Moroni, according to Japanese news reports.

The Italian Foreign Ministry said that the three Italian survivors included two officials with the Italian embassy in Addis Ababa.

Just before the crash the plane was "flying very low" and "landed on the water about a kilometre from the hotel" where there is a coral reef encircling the island, a woman hotel employee said.

The wingtip touched the water first and then the plane split into three pieces. "There was a loud noise and then an explosion," she said.

Ethiopia has been the scene of a string of bomb attacks this year blamed by the authorities on Islamic fundamentalist groups. Earlier this month national radio reported that police in the country had arrested 11 suspects.

Mother Teresa's heart problems persist

CALCUTTA (R) — Mother Teresa suffered heart failure for the second time in three days Sunday, and her doctor said the renowned missionary would not be released from hospital soon.

"Mother Teresa developed heart problems last night and this morning," Dr Dinamani Banerjee, a member of the medical board looking after the 86-year-old Roman Catholic nun at Calcutta's Woodlands Nursing Home, told Reuters.

Mother Teresa, known as the "saint of the gutters" for her work with the world's down-trodden, was admitted to hospital with an irregular heart beat early Friday, the third time since August she had been admitted for emergency care.

She had begun recovering Saturday and told doctors she wanted to go home.

But Dr. Banerjee said the Nobel Peace Prize winner suffered left ventricular heart failure Saturday night and again Sunday morning.

"She is more stable than what she was Thursday night but recurrence of heart failure needs more investigation and we are not releasing her soon," Dr. Banerjee said.

The doctor said Mother Teresa was being given oxygen from time to time and her problem had been checked with medication. She was in the intensive cardiac unit but not in critical condition.

"We cannot say there is no danger for her life but at this moment she is not critical," Dr S.K. Sen told reporters, adding that doctors had not been able to reduce her emergency medication.

A hospital medical bulletin said, "mother is progressing well but her heart failure and irregular beats are still persisting. She needs further observation and investigations."

Sister Mitra, in charge of the cardiac unit at Woodlands Nursing Home, said Mother Teresa had spoken to nuns from her Missionaries of Charity religious order and written a letter before she developed heart problems Sunday.

Sean Connery ad gives Scottish Nationalists boost

LONDON (R) — A political broadcast by film star Sean Connery for the Scottish Nationalists gave the party a record membership boost, a spokeswoman said Saturday.

Almost 600 people applied to join the Scottish National Party (SNP), which has said an independent Scotland would be the world's 21st richest nation, after the Scottish star made a television appeal for the party Thursday night.

The party hopes he can make more broadcasts in the run-up to the general election, due by next May.

she said.

In his broadcast, Connery welcomed the recent return to Scotland of the highly symbolic stone of destiny which was taken to England 700 years ago by Edward I. But he said: "We need the substance, not just the symbols. We need more."

The main target for the Scottish Nationalists is the opposition Labour Party, the biggest party in Scotland and well ahead of the ruling Conservatives in British opinion polls.

The Nationalists enjoy nearly 30 per cent support in Scotland while Labour

stands at 48 per cent and the Conservatives are running third with about 15 per cent. Labour has been severely damaged in Scotland by a series of policy switches on its plans for a referendum on a devolved Scottish parliament.

Since 1296, the stone of destiny had been under a throne in London's Westminster Abbey, where England's kings and queens have traditionally been crowned. It has now been taken to the Scottish capital of Edinburgh.

U.K. calls on IRA to implement truce

LONDON (R) — Britain, struggling to revive the flagging Northern Ireland peace process, Sunday called on the IRA to call a lasting ceasefire and told the guerrilla group the "ball is now in your court."

"They must demonstrate openly and convincingly that this time their ceasefire would be for real and would be for good," Northern Ireland Minister Michael Ancram said after the latest peace feelers from Sinn Fein, the IRA's political wing.

Sinn Fein held a one-day party "conflict resolution" conference Saturday in a climate of uncertainty about a peace process that collapsed in February when the

Irish Republican Army, which is battling to oust Britain from Northern Ireland, set off bombs in London.

Party strategist Martin McGuinness said after the conference in the Irish Republic that Britain had been given proposals from moderate nationalist leader John Hume and Sinn Fein Leader Gerry Adams for more than a month but had not yet responded.

Mr. Adams said: "What we need now is the courage from (British Prime Minister John) Major. The key is in his hands."

Ancram responded after the Sinn Fein meeting with a statement that showed there was little sign of any

progress. "The PIRA (Provisional Irish Republican Army) ceasefire should be restored immediately it should never have been ended. As the sole perpetrators of the violence they alone can restore the ceasefire. The ball is firmly in PIRA's court," he said.

"If they do so in a way which is genuinely unequivocal, that is to say in a way which is both credible and dependable, then they can end the self-imposed exclusion of Sinn Fein from the talks process and from democratic dialogue on the future of Northern Ireland," he added.

Major faces fresh crisis over Europe

LONDON (R) — Beleaguered British Prime Minister John Major Sunday faced a fresh crisis over Europe amid allegations that his government withheld vital documents from parliament on monetary union.

Mr. Major, his majority down to just one in parliament, is already battling to unite mutinous Conservatives after the ruling party revolted over demands for a full parliamentary debate on Britain's role in the European Union.

The Sunday Times stoked the political fire that Mr. Major is trying to quench by alleging that crucial documents about the preparations for a single European currency had been kept from members of parliament.

That prompted Labour opposition finance spokesman Gordon Brown to accuse the Conservatives of a cover-up and say: "Parliament has not yet been told

the full truth."

"A special debate is now even more important than ever. It is a principle of parliamentary scrutiny that ministers may run but cannot hide. There must be a debate this week," he said.

The paper said that the four documents, including reports from the British treasury and the European Monetary Institute, revealed that Brussels would interfere in Britain's economic policy even if it opted out of the Euro single currency.

The reports were said to suggest that the pound Sterling will need to shadow the Euro even if it does not enter a new exchange rate mechanism.

"The current proposals will not be acceptable to parliament," an internal treasury report was quoted as concluding.

But the treasury denied any accusations of a cover-up. "No official document

properly liable to parliamentary scrutiny has been withheld," a spokesman said in response to the Sunday Times report.

In the six years since he took over from Margaret Thatcher, Mr. Major has been dogged by constant party feuds with so-called Eurosceptics arguing that Brussels is bent on destroying Britain's national sovereignty in a United States of Europe.

Finance Minister Kenneth Clarke, fine-tuning Tuesday's crucial last budget before the next general election, sought to defuse the row last week by writing to all 651 members of parliament.

He said he did not expect any legislation on European Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) to come up for adoption when European Union finance ministers meet on Dec. 2 in Brussels.

Belarus votes in controversial referendum

MINSK (R) — The people of Belarus were completing voting in a deeply controversial referendum Sunday in which President Alexander Lukashenko is seeking sweeping new powers over rival institutions and an extended term in office.

Polling stations opened at 6 a.m. (0400 GMT) and were due to close at 10 p.m. (2000 GMT) on the last day of a long process that began on Nov. 9. Preliminary results should be available at some point Monday, officials say.

The former Soviet Republic was plunged back into political crisis Saturday when Mr. Lukashenko and a rebellious parliament both reneged on a deal brokered by neighbouring Russia aimed at resolving their dispute over the referendum.

Turnout figures for the period since Nov. 9, announced on state television Sunday, suggested very heavy polling.

That is expected to favour Mr. Lukashenko, who enjoys especially strong sup-

port in country areas of largely rural Belarus.

More than 50 per cent of votes had already been cast in Mogilyov region, the television said. In Vitebsk region, the figure was 32 per cent and in Minsk over 20 per cent. In one rural area on the Ukrainian border early voting hit 60 per cent.

Sources told Interfax news agency some two million people — about a third of the total electorate — had voted by Saturday.

A defiant Lukashenko addressed the nation of 10 million people on state television Saturday, pointing to religious and ethnic conflicts in other former Soviet republics and saying the country he runs is an "island of stability."

The president wants to use the vote to tighten his grip on rival institutions, including parliament, and extend his term by more than two years — an idea which parliamentarians oppose.

"It is not a choice between president and parliament. It is a choice between chaos

and anarchy on one hand, and discipline, order and a changes for the better on the other," he said.

Communists, liberals and nationalists have recently joined forces to oppose Mr. Lukashenko, 42, and his authoritarian style of rule. But there is a lack of strong opposition leadership in the nation sandwiched between Russia and Poland.

Interfax Sunday quoted a spokesman for Belarus's security council denying the country had sent its last remaining Soviet nuclear missiles to Russia for scrapping, contradicting statements last week by other officials.

Mr. Lukashenko had threatened to hang on to 18 SS-25 strategic missiles — which are controlled by Moscow — as a bargaining chip against NATO's plans to expand eastwards.

ITAR-TASS news agency quoted an official at Russia's strategic command saying the withdrawal of missiles was continuing and would be completed by the end-year deadline.

The referendum poses seven questions, including whether to accept Mr. Lukashenko's draft constitution to broaden his powers.

After a brief period Friday when the compromise looked like holding, both Mr. Lukashenko and parliament reneged on the Russian-brokered deal the following day. Mr. Lukashenko compared deputies to animals in a zoo and said he had cancelled half of the accord after the parliament failed to approve it.

Moscow is Mr. Lukashenko's closest ally and the Kremlin is seen as the only power with enough clout to influence him.

Russia's ORT television, which tends to back the Kremlin, broadcast an anti-Lukashenko item late Saturday and a long interview with his main foe, parliament Chief Semyon Sharstsky.

Mr. Lukashenko's voice was heard praising Adolf Hitler for bringing order to Germany with footage of a concentration camp.

Russian minister slams NATO enlargement plans

MOSCOW (R) — Russian Defence Minister Igor Rodionov, in an apparent change of mind, Saturday blasted NATO's plans to expand eastwards, saying enlargement would bring "another cold spell" to Europe.

"NATO's expansion to the east is under no circumstances acceptable to Russia," ITAR-TASS news agency quoted Mr. Rodionov as saying after talks

with visiting Slovak Defence Minister Jan Sliek.

"I have always been an opponent of NATO enlargement and remain such to the end, until we resolve this issue," Mr. Rodionov said, adding it was the Western alliance's right to decide on new members.

"It would bring along another cold spell to Europe after a warm period which came with the end of the cold war," Russia has vigorously op-

posed NATO plans to expand to the east to take in some of Moscow's former East Bloc allies, but had appeared recently to soften its stance in a tacit recognition that it can do little to stop the expansion.

Mr. Rodionov's remarks earlier this week appeared to reflect such approach. On Tuesday, talking to journalists after meeting visiting British Defence Minister Michael Portillo,

Mr. Rodionov said Mr. Portillo had persuaded him NATO was no threat.

He added that a military cooperation deal with Britain could be signed soon.

"I am convinced. But now I have to convince millions of people, above all in Russia, and we have to work on this. Just as we have to convince the West that Russia poses no threat to the West," Mr. Rodionov said.

Jordan Times

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Editor-in-Chief:
GEORGE S. HAWATMEH

Editorial and advertising offices:
Jordan Press Foundation,
University Road, P.O. Box 6710, Amman, Jordan.

Telephone: 684311, 699634
Telex: 21497 ALRAI JO
Facsimile: 696183

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New status, same goals

U.S. PRESIDENT Bill Clinton's decision last week to designate Jordan as a major non-NATO ally of the U.S. must be seen as an important landmark in this country's efforts to connect, as a sovereign state, with regional and international groupings. Over and above the fact that this association with NATO will afford Jordan a "priority consideration" for the procurement of sophisticated military aid and equipment, the new relationship crowns the country's long-standing determination to seek and play a constructive political role in bringing peoples and nations from different parts of the world together, on the basis of mutual understanding, moderation and the pursuit of peace.

According to the terms of the designation Jordan will be entitled to receive appropriations to modernise its armed forces and enhance the training of its military personnel in all fields of defence. This coveted status was long sought by Jordan and is part and parcel of what His Majesty King Hussein described as His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan's persistent efforts for further interaction with regional and international blocks. In a letter he sent to Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti following the announcement of President Clinton's decision, the King not only hailed the achievement but also paid special tribute to the Crown Prince for spearheading the national efforts for greater recognition and appreciation of Jordan's contribution towards regional peace and international stability.

By so attaining the status of a non-NATO ally, Jordan has in effect joined the camp of such Arab countries as Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco and Mauritania which have preceded us in receiving a privileged position with the Western alliance. No doubt this link, even in its most modest forms, will enhance the Kingdom's sense of security, stability and territorial integrity. While the new designation does not necessarily carry with it any new or expanded U.S. or NATO commitment to defend Jordan, it stands to reason that the special relationship that is being forged will also add to the security of the country against all forms of foreign threats and possible aggression.

The Helsinki conference for security and cooperation, better known now as the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe, has long served as a model for a new European-Mediterranean partnership. The "building of bridges of civilised dialogue with influential international groupings," which this association agreement with NATO entails, aims first and foremost to elevate Jordan's relationship with the outside world to a new horizon. The new status, it must be emphasised, is not directed against any country in the Middle East or otherwise. There will be no foreign military bases on Jordanian soil just as no hostile intentions will be harboured against our neighbouring states as a result of this relationship. Which is another reason why Jordan's new status needs to be examined in its proper perspective especially by our own people here at home.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A WRITER FOR Al Ra'i Sunday accused the electricity workers of exercising blackmail on the nation by maintaining their general strike which, they hope, will secure for them more material gains. Fahed Faneh said a strike is justified when the workers complain from actual problems and grievances and are underpaid, but the electricity workers do not fall under this category. He said these workers are demanding a 15th annual salary and the cancellation of a general agreement concluded by their union and the company's management last year, in addition to a 10 per cent hardship allowance. Compared to workers in other sectors, they are considered better off in terms of wages and thus their demands are not justified, said the writer. When the doctors and engineers staged a sit-in and a partial work stoppage, they were demanding to be treated on equal terms with their colleagues in other sectors, the writer pointed out. He said the electricity workers, who receive 14-month salaries annually, have little to complain about. What is most disturbing is their threat to disrupt electric supplies to homes, hospitals and factories, something which the writer described as not only a form of blackmail but rather endangering national security and harming public interests.

SULTAN AL Hattab, a writer for Al Ra'i, Sunday praised the present government for mustering courage and publishing facts about corrupt cases and the names of ministries and government departments where corruption occurred. Unlike the previous governments, the present government is not ashamed to expose the facts about corruption, which last year cost the nation a fortune, and it seems determined to pursue this policy and flush out the corrupt officials, in line with its declared policy statement before parliament, said the writer. By exposing 13 government ministries where abuse of authority and embezzlement occurred, the government deserves praise; but that is only the tip of the iceberg and the government has a long way to go in this national task, especially as many of the corrupt officials are either well protected or wield great influence in government circles and elsewhere, according to the writer. He said to cleanse the nation's image, the government should not be left alone in the arena but ought to be assisted by the public, adding that it is a national duty for Jordanian citizens to report corruption wherever it might occur and assist the government in carrying out this formidable task in the best interest of the nation.

Economic Review

By Dr. Yusuf Mansur

Reviewing the labour equation from the demand side

THE RECENT interest in unemployment and poverty in Jordan and the slow recovery of the labour market lead one to question the Jordanian labour equation. According to a recent study by the Department of the Budget, each year the government pays over one billion dinars (JD 1.065 billion, to be exact) in salaries to almost half a million civil and military personnel, including retirees and all employees of publicly run organisations; this makes up 61 per cent of the total government budget. The salaries of civil servants, military personnel and the retired represent 48.2 per cent of the government budget which is JD 1.745 billion for 1996 and representing 16.4 per cent of the estimated gross domestic product (GDP). Over 46 per cent of the Jordanian work force (1.01 million persons) depends on the government budget for their wage income. But what does all this mean?

First, such large numbers indicate that Jordan is a planned economy, where the government plans and directs most of the economic activity with very little or no regard for the market system. This, in turn, means that Jordan must move fast towards decreasing the size of its military and employees in general if it is to adopt a market system. In other words, it must start behaving as a market economy and the privatisation programme must move full speed without ignoring the painful adjustment effects on the employees of enterprises that are to be privatised.

Second, inadvertently and unintentionally of course, the government is participating in creating poverty by offering low-income opportunities. The average salary of a civil servant is just under JD 250, the average salary of a person who depends on the government for his/her salary income is JD 229, and the average salary of a retired person is JD 140, as can be determined from the study. If a husband and wife work for the government, they will be living well below the poverty line of JD 600, which is ironic. The very policy of hiring people to create employment opportunities has resulted in impoverishing those it set out to help. Furthermore, the government allows the free movement of labour from Syria and Egypt into Jordan, thus enabling migrant labour to further depress the wages of unskilled nationals. As a result, the wages in the private sector are also lowered by government policy.

Additionally, the void between the wages of the skilled and unskilled in the private sector is widened which contributes to unnecessary and dangerous social imbalances that should not be allowed to persist.

Third, the government, due to budget cuts and restructuring efforts, is forced to create unemployment because it cannot keep up with the labour growth rate of 3.24 per cent. Public hiring, which accelerated in the late seventies and early eighties due to the oil boom and then crashed, has severely destabilised the market for labour. In Jordan,

as in Syria and Egypt, young workers with a secondary education make up 40-60 per cent of the unemployed. Labour, which is less mobile than capital, especially when unskilled, can severely limit the future growth rate of the economy and cause disturbing damage to the stock of human capital of a nation as the unemployed suppress the wages of the future generations.

Will the highly publicised minimum wage proposal be effective in reducing labour market inefficiencies? Only if it increases wages above the national average. The proposed minimum wage is JD 120. This will have no effect on the labour market, except in very few cases, and may lead to further misery. In many sectors, Jordan has large single employers (monopsonies) who will have to abide by the minimum wage bill if introduced. For example, the minimum wage will have no effect on the average salaries of civil servants because they make almost twice the minimum. Policy, therefore, must take into account the strategic responses of such employers and their salary structure. Importantly, the minimum wage must be indexed with the inflation rate, otherwise an effective wage rate is quickly rendered ineffective with hyperinflation. Furthermore, the minimum wage should be an hourly wage, instead of monthly, to underscore the importance of time, a precious commodity that should be measured in increments and not in lump sums.

Low wages negatively impact performance and productivity, thus leading to low quality output. Little or no production and high incidence of corruption. Imagine a low paid civil servant visited by a foreign investor who wants to invest JD 10 million in Jordan. The civil servant will invariably respond to the investor with indifference, while the latter is expecting the red carpet treatment. This form of behaviour should not surprise anyone. In fact, the civil servant will have behaved as a completely rational economic agent. A rational agent produces a service that is commensurate with his compensation. Being a lowly paid employee, and given the "wasta" promotion system, he has no incentive to work harder. So, the investor is actually the nemesis of the civil servant because he would be edging the latter to work more at the same rate of pay. And while it is true that society benefits as a whole from increased investment, the civil servant very rationally sees that his private cost (extra work) is immediate and greater than his share of the social benefit which he will receive from the investment in the future. So he refuses to work and puts the paperwork or investment application aside.

A rational investor realises this, sooner or later, and decides either to flee the country or make the transaction immediately beneficial to the civil servant. Truly, the whole equation of who employs who and how must be revised: not tomorrow, but yesterday.

European monetary union will come to be and prosper

By Roy Denman

BRUSSELS — "A common European currency doesn't make political sense," said the headline over an article by William Pfaff recently. I would like to offer a different view.

All great adventures in history come escorted by an unkindness of croaking ravens. In the middle of the 19th century, Italy and Germany were patchwork quilts of different fiefdoms. Alessandro Manzoni was laughed at when he declared that Italy would become a nation. The British prime minister, Benjamin Disraeli, spoke of the "dreamy and dangerous non-sense called German nationality." It was not just Bismarck who proved him wrong.

Will the croaking ravens this time be right? Mr. Pfaff sets out, with his usual clarity, four closely marshalled reasons.

Currency union is "something of an improvisation... a superficially appealing idea."

In 1941, when Hitler was at the gates of Moscow and master of Europe, any sensible person would have despaired of Europe's fate. Yet a traveller could have gone to Geneva, wandered through the empty, echoing halls of the League of Nations and found in a 1930s study of customs unions a preview of Europe in the second half of this century and the first quarter of the next.

"For a customs union to exist it is necessary to allow free movement of goods within the union. For a customs union to be a reality it is necessary to allow free movement of persons. For a customs union to be stable it is necessary to maintain free exchangeability of currency and stable exchange rates within the union. This implies, inter alia, free movement of capital within the union."

"When there is free movement of goods, per-

sons and capital in any area, diverse economic policies concerned with maintaining economic activity cannot be pursued. To assure uniformity of policy, some political mechanism is required."

Currency and political union are not latter-day improvisations: they were fundamental even before the creation. Walter Hallstein, the first president of the European Commission, coined the slogan, way back in the 1950s, "customs union, economic union, political union."

A common currency is not just a logical progression. Without it the laboriously achieved single market will collapse. "Diverse economic policies" will lead, as night follows day, to currency fluctuations. When these are big enough, there will be irresistible pressure for import restrictions.

Then we shall be back to competitive devaluations, import barriers, mass unemployment, with all the terrible ghosts of the 1930s assembling again.

"The Germans are insisting that by the Dec. 13-14 meeting in Dublin of the European heads of government there must be agreement on a rigid regime of rules and punishments for membership in, or deviation from, the single currency's stability mechanism."

And so, in the name of sanity, they should. Politicians love handing other people's money to cheering crowds. The result is a cycle of inflation and devaluation. This happened in Germany in spades in the 1920s, impoverished the nation and paved the way for Hitler.

For 40 years Germany has pursued a policy of fiscal prudence. Britain one of popular extravagance. Result? The pound has lost 80 per cent of its value against the mark.

The German game is also more subtle than that. The Germans know that committing all the present 15 EU members to an economic policy restrained enough to permit lower interest rates, more investment and lower unemployment is about as likely as entering a pub late in the evening and persuading everyone to take the pledge.

Five countries (Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg and Austria) already constitute a Deutsche mark zone. What

Human Rights File

Should immunity be granted to people's representatives?

By Waleed M. Sadi

THE RECENT sentence by the Court of First Instance incriminating Deputy Toujan Faisal for allegedly defaming a Jordanian woman and ordering her incarceration and payment of damages raises fundamental issues on parliamentary immunity as well as human rights.

The immediate basic issue is, of course, parliamentary immunity per se, which deputies enjoy only when Parliament is in session. The first thing to be reflected on and decided upon in this context, therefore, is whether parliamentarians should enjoy immunity at all, whether Parliament is in session or not.

In other words, it is the principle of parliamentary immunity that calls for a closer scrutiny. If the answer is in favour of according parliamentary immunity, then we should proceed to the following question, that emanates from the first, and ask ourselves whether there should be a distinction between the representatives of the people when they are in session or in recess.

The third question that comes to mind is whether parliamentary immunity should cover all activities of the parliamentarians or should be confined to matters that are directly or indirectly related and intertwined with their functions as the appointed or elected representatives of the people.

The fourth issue is, whether it is appropriate to make a distinction between elected deputies in the Lower House and appointed members of the Senate when there is a clearcut decision about whether to endorse the principle of parliamentary immunity or not.

Last, but not least, is the question of whether imprisonment is an acceptable form of punishment under international norms, whenever somebody is ruled against for defaming or libelling another.

Obviously, there are two schools of thought on granting or denying immunity to parliamentarians. It seems to me that the proper answer to this question rests solely with whether immunity is necessary in order for parliamentarians to carry out their functions and duties as representatives of the people. To put it differently, can parliamentarians perform their duties without the absolute need to violate the law of the land? If senators and deputies can indeed play their roles within the confines of the law, then there is no need to grant any of them immunity, irrespective of whether Parliament is in session or not.

In my estimation, the people's representatives, whether in the Lower or Upper House, can carry out the function for which they were elected or appointed within the perimeters of the law, as all citizens do. If this proposition is accepted, then no senator or deputy may enjoy immunity at any time during her or his term.

If, on the other hand, the other school of thought prevails and it is decided that parliamentarians need immunity, then it makes no sense whatsoever to make a distinction between the periods when Parliament is in session and when it is not. The duties and functions of senators and deputies do not cease when the parliament is in recess.

It cannot be argued that a senator or deputy ends her or his work when there is a recess. The contrary is true. Senators and deputies go on fulfilling their obligations even when their respective chambers are not in session, as long as their membership has not ended. I submit it would be unwise to think differently. Otherwise, the granting of parliamentary immunity becomes a shallow exercise and is effectively frustrated if senators and deputies know that they can be arrested and taken to court, for example, a minute after their respective houses enter in a recess.

I think we need to be consistent with ourselves and with the principled decision to accord or deny parliamentarians immunity. If there is a decision to accord them such exemptions from the application of the law, then it is only fair and logical to extend this exemption throughout the duration of their membership and not make it contingent on Parliament's being in session or not.

It goes without saying that senators and deputies should not be accorded differential treatment when it comes to immunity, should there be a final decision to grant it to them. Senators are also people's representatives even though they are appointed by His Majesty the King. The functions of senators are not distinguishable from those of deputies for the purposes of granting or denying immunities.

This leads to me to the last and final issue, namely, whether defaming or libelling of a character should be criminalised and carry a punishment of imprisonment. The rule of thumb is that defamation or libel gives grounds for a civil suit and the payment of damages when it is substantiated. Criminal prosecution of people who defame or libel others is not the international norm in these contemporary times. Criminal intent in cases of defamation or libel usually qualifies the victim for higher compensations which are normally referred to as punitive damages, as distinguished from compensatory damages.

To get back to Deputy Toujan Faisal's case, as long as deputies enjoy immunity, it would be illogical in my estimation to deny her this immunity simply because the circumstances of her case occurred when the Lower House was not in session. Second, even if immunity is lifted in her situation, she should not be criminally prosecuted and submitted to the bizarre and unusual punishment of imprisonment. The most that Deputy Faisal should have been subjected to if the judgement against her had been upheld would have been to make her pay damages to the victim, nothing more, nothing less.

But now that the "victim" in her case has effectively withdrawn her complaint, it can be presumed that all pending charges against Deputy Faisal will also be withdrawn in due course. Dropping the case against the deputy should not, however, lead to complacency about the issues that it has raised. Rather the case should prompt us to reexamine the existing law governing defamation and libel and make it more in line with international standards.

New Amman

ESCWA region

By Sacha Baggili

small in the Jordan Times

AN EN... meeting on water... at the national... of es... a mechanism... utilisation and... water resources... in the region of... here Sunday wi... remainder of the sea... in the area and... implications of... for its future.

representatives of the... states of... and West... (ESCWA) region... delegates f... regional organisations... experts are partici... in the three-day mee... and in reviewing cur... of water laws and... implementation in relation... utilisation... management of w... countries in the ESCWA region is... and in an and or semi-

By Gary Young

TRAFFIC control... to compare themselves... names dealers. Guid... aviation planes to lo... at any one time, t... in front of compu... stems, fuelled by... and making snap de... that affect the lives... of people aroun... world. Their skill is... what will happen... and potential calam... exploit possible oppo... one while trying to k... heads, their hair an... adium of poise... but in aviation, as... force for all the relia... waters, beaver av... will always be a ro... — a Nick Leeson... takes on... and is in too deep a... to pull the em... pay card until it is... ze so bringing the wh... crashing down... like the controller w... frustrated by... number of blips on... screen, representing pla... going to land, that he... a four- and started eli... some one by one... of the woman in Anz... to put an American W... and U.S. Air Fo... after on a collision cou... a they closed in... a crash, then froze wh... realised what she h... as a crash was aver... when her supervi... stepped in and the fig... she was ordered to char...

the man in New... Jersey, ushering in... at the same time, w... his electronic frequ... as a crucial moment... in horror as he... planes... strayed dang... off course. As the f... thousands of passeng... stepped from his hands... a out a primal scream... his shirt off as a... a wreck on a... of the control room... charged on medic... and in each ca... but these incidents... a cautionary ta... When it comes to f... ignorance is bliss... flying, as any press of... tell you, is the saf... of transport. At p... the chances of yo... crashing is little mo... than three in a million. E... the statistics back... argument convincing... of relatively infre... are disasters the nu... has leapt dramatical... the recent near colli... between a British Airw... flying 767 and an Air U... 100 over south-ea... between a Saudi jumbo... and a Kazakh airliner... which all 350 passeng...

Amman meeting focuses on laws on a precious commodity — water

'ESCWA region needs measures to protect and safeguard water resources and attention on river basins'

By Sacha Baggili
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — An expert group meeting on water legislation at the national level and the potential of establishing a mechanism for rational utilisation and integrated water resources management here Sunday with a grim reminder of the scarcity of water in the area and the negative implications of this reality for its future.

Representatives of the 12 member states of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) region as well as delegates from regional organisations and other experts are participating in the three-day meeting aimed at reviewing current and planned efforts to formulate water laws and their implementation in relation to development, utilisation and management of water resources in the ESCWA region.

The ESCWA region is situated in an arid or semi-arid

zone of difficult climatic conditions and sharp disparity, and one of the most pronounced features of this region is its limited water resources. Hazem Beblawi, executive secretary of ESCWA, said in an opening speech at the meeting.

Therefore, protecting and safeguarding water resources, by following an approach which takes into account the various ecological systems, to provide sufficient quantities of good quality water to all users, is an inescapable necessity, he said.

In the introduction of a study presented to the meeting, the ESCWA secretariat asserts that "adequate quantity and quality of water resources in the Middle East is one of the main requirements for promotion and enhancement of economic and social development and quality of life on a local and regional level."

The study, entitled "Water legislation in selected ESCWA countries," the first of 20 studies to be presented

during the three-day meeting, gives technical information on water legislation in various countries and contains tentative recommendations.

Discussions at the meeting also tackled the development of water legislation in Arab countries in the context of Sharia, customary laws, local traditions and the Islamic belief that water is a gift from God.

A second study by the ESCWA secretariat addressed the issue of "shared surface water systems," namely the river basins of the Nile, the Tigris, the Jordan and the Orenus.

The ESCWA study named "Water resources agreements and practices in selected water sheds in the ESCWA region," stated that efforts to reach cooperative utilisation of the river water system have been overshadowed by the Arab-Israeli conflict.

In the last two decades, ESCWA has undertaken the preparation of technical studies and reports and the

organisation of meetings "and has also offered technical consultation services, in order to address specific water issues," Dr. Beblawi said.

Acting Minister of Water and Minister of Public Works Abdul Hadi Al Majali told the meeting that Jordan was concerned with developing water legislation to ensure efficient management and utilisation of water resources.

Mr. Majali stressed the importance of having water laws that are practical, implementable and can ensure fair distribution of water resources.

"The disparity among available water resources current needs and the needs for future development is among the major challenges facing the region," said Mr. Majali, adding that the only way to address the situation is through the adoption of efficient management systems on the national and regional levels.

Mr. Majali said that regional and international

cooperation on water issues is inevitable in light of the common challenges that the dearth of water resources poses.

Abdul Hamid Kayed, regional director of the Arab Organisation for Agricultural Development, said the Kingdom is seeking the involvement of the private sector in water management in pursuit of more efficient utilisation of water resources.

The Kingdom is facing an acute water shortage problem and its annual consumption is threatening the country's both renewable and non-renewable sources of water.

Every year Jordan uses approximately 833 million cubic metres (MCM) of water while only 650 MCM are replaced annually by nature. Ground water provides Jordan with 60 per cent of its total water demand and is stored in relatively deep sandstone and carbonate formations such as in the Disi, Karak and Zarga. Surface water consists of the flow

available from the Jordan, Yarmouk and Zarga rivers, and flood flows in Karak and Hara.

Approximately 613 MCM of water are used in Jordan for agricultural purposes, 180 MCM for domestic use and 42 MCM for industry. But officials insist that they have launched serious efforts to ensure better management of water resources and decrease wastage.

In 1988 a law was issued attaching the Water Authority of Jordan and the Jordan Valley Authority to the Ministry of Water and Irrigation in a bid aimed at "strengthening and defining the functions, responsibilities and jurisdictions of the water authorities," said the ESCWA study.

Presentations of individual country papers, reflecting national experiences, will take place Monday. On Tuesday the meeting will focus on the recommendations of the expert group and the possibilities of adopting the final report on water legislation in the region.

Man confesses to murdering teenage girl

By Ahmad Kreishan
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A 20-year-old man has confessed to murdering a 17-year-old girl whose body was recently found in Yajouz Forest north of Amman. Public Security Department (PSD) sources revealed Sunday.

The suspect, identifying the suspect only as S. M. A., said he made the confession late Sunday in the presence of PSD Director Nassouh Mohieddine and senior officers.

According to the suspect, he was with two of his friends on Nov. 2 in the forest area when they saw a car carrying the victim, a student, along with another man go into the forest.

The suspect and a friend then started to search for the car inside the forest, the sources said, adding that

when they found the car the driver started the engine and was about to leave.

The suspect then pulled a gun and shot at the car once, hitting the girl fatally in the head.

The driver of the car, who was not identified by the sources, then threw the girl's body out of the car and fled the scene.

The sources said that the PSD started an intensive investigation into the case questioning several people until it obtained information revealing the identity of the perpetrator.

Faced with evidence against him and the testimony of his friends who were with him at the crime scene, the suspect confessed to committing the murder, the sources told the Jordan Times.

'These are not lives here; they are just dots'

By Gary Young

AIR TRAFFIC controllers like to compare themselves to futures dealers. Guiding up to a dozen planes to land safely at any one time, they sit in front of computer screens, fuelled by fast food, making snap decisions that affect the lives of millions of people around the world. Their skill is to predict what will happen, avoid potential calamities and exploit possible opportunities while trying to keep their heads, their hair and a modicum of poise.

But in aviation, as in finance, for all the reliable workers 'beavering' away there will always be a rogue trader — a Nick Leeson of the skies who takes on too much, is in too deep and refuses to pull the emergency cord until it is too late, so bringing the whole house crashing down.

Like the controller who got so frustrated by the number of blips on his screen, representing planes waiting to land, that he took his cursor and started eliminating them one by one.

Or the woman in Arizona who put an American West 737 and U.S. Air Force fighter on a collision course as they closed in at 800mph, then froze when she realised what she had done. A crash was averted only when her supervisor stepped in and the fighter pilot was ordered to change course.

Or the man in Newark, New Jersey, ushering in 10 jets at the same time, who lost his electronic frequency at a crucial moment and watched in horror as all of the planes strayed dangerously off course. As the fate of thousands of passengers slipped from his hands, he let out a primal scream, ripped his shirt off and ended his working day as a half-naked wreck on the floor of the control room.

All these controllers were discharged on medical leave and in each case, miraculously, nobody was hurt. But these incidents provide a cautionary tale for the anxious air passenger: When it comes to flying, ignorance is bliss.

Flying, as any press officer in the aviation industry will tell you, is the safest form of transport. At present, the chances of your plane crashing is little more than three in a million. But while the statistics back up this argument convincingly, the headlines do not. After a period of relatively infrequent air disasters the number of incidents in the last year has leapt dramatically. The recent near collision between a British Airways Boeing 767 and an Air U.K. Fokker 100 over south-east Scotland follows the crash between a Saudi jumbo jet and a Kazakh airliner last week. The accident, in which all 350 passengers



Keeping an eye on the blips... an air traffic controller at London's Heathrow airport

and crew were killed, made headlines around the world.

When a jet belonging to the bucket-price airline Valujet, plunged into the Florida Everglades leaving 110 dead, Valujet was grounded by the Federal Aviation Authority because of its poor safety record. When it took to the air again at the end of September one American commentator quipped that a passenger without an identity card could always present his dental records. A Wall Street Journal survey predicted that at current rates there would be one Valujet-type disaster every month within a decade.

But in the meantime, despite the morbid jibes even pilots insist that flying is still less dangerous than driving. As one U.S. pilot says: "My insurance company is more bothered about whether I smoke than the fact that I fly. When I'm flying I know that everybody else in the air has a certain level of expertise and a licence. You don't know what you're dealing with on the road."

But even as the captain of the aircraft is offering you reassuring words about the local weather conditions, there is a world of information going into his headset that you would not only not understand but probably

wouldn't want to know about if you did.

To imagine an air traffic controller's job you must first picture the sky divided up into separate control zones, then further subdivided by separate layers determined by altitude. Each plane is represented by small blips and numbers which indicate the type of plane, its speed, altitude and destination.

The controller must guide the planes in his or her control area — sometimes several at a time — into the airport while ensuring that they remain a safe distance apart. Most of the time, the system functions without incident. But at peak times in busy airports, things can often descend into chaos: "What a f... system. Send 'em all to the same place and then expect us to stop 'em hitting," says one British controller.

For a stress-free journey, it is not advisable to dwell on just how chaotic those chaotic moments can be. That way you won't have to concern yourself that an air traffic controller might be, in air traffic control speak: "Going down the pipes" — lapsing in concentration and losing track of what is happening on the radar screen; about to "eat a deal" — make a mistake which is reported to the Federal

Aviation Authority; or "fishing for a tone" — looking for the two weeks off, granted if overpowering feedback from his headset causes him to fail a hearing test.

The fact is that an air traffic controller's job is just like everybody else's. "You've got to have two mentalities," one controller told the New York Times. "One: These aren't lives here; they are just dots. And two: Even as bad as you can mess up, it's a big sky; the planes won't hit. Otherwise the stress is too much. You'd have to have a heart

"The trouble is that ATCs shifts have got far harder recently and promise to get even harder. Thanks to under-investment in technology, under-staffing and a massive increase in workload, the majority are performing in what amounts to sweatshop conditions."

attack. You'd be done."

The trouble is that ATCs shifts have got far harder recently and promise to get even harder. Thanks to under-investment in technology, under-staffing and a massive increase in workload, the majority are performing in what amounts to

sweatshop conditions.

The U.S. is now using vacuum-tubed computers which have only 1 per cent of the capacity of the power of an ordinary desk-top PC. "We are using World War II radar screens and IBM computers from the 1960s," says U.S. controller Teddi-Jann Casey.

Moreover, it is not uncommon for radar screens to go completely blank for hours — even days — at time and for the controllers to look out for air traffic by peering through binoculars. "We're depending on finding the

over five per cent a year in the foreseeable future. By 2010 the annual number of commercial airline departures will have grown from 14 million to 22 million.

This means more "stacks" or circling aircraft in the skies waiting to land and growing queues of planes on the tarmac waiting to take off. For airport controllers, more stacks means more blips on the screen which means more stress.

Their lives are further complicated by the number of relatively inexperienced pilots eager to practice in small aircraft. As one California controller puts it: "There are a lot of student pilots that fly in and out of here. They want to go to Disneyland and they've got the family with them. But they've never really flown in congested air space like this. We have to deal with those things on a regular basis."

Finally there is the language problem. According to the International Civil Aviation Organisation, even though the international language of aviators is English, a great deal of phraseology remains colloquial. One American pilot, who was second in the queue to touch down at Gatwick, received the instruction: "Pop over". The English controller

meant that he should keep circling but the pilot thought he was being told to leapfrog the first plane and land in front.

Add this problem to the general effects of deregulation — which has helped spawn hundreds of new no-frills airlines using old aeroplanes and badly-paid crews — and you have a rough sketch of what might have happened outside New Delhi recently. Indian aviation experts say that pilots from the former Soviet Union have always had problems understanding instructions in English and their cockpit equipment is marked in metric.

None of this has been helped by the strong push towards deregulation and the Reagan decision to sack two-thirds of U.S. air traffic controllers in the early eighties after they went on strike 15 years ago. Many American airports still have fewer fully-trained staff than before the dispute even though the number of flights has increased by 200 per cent in some cases.

The British government plans to push ahead with privatisation of its air traffic control system, which the unions claim will compromise safety standards. "Our opposition is not based on ideology but real concern over a safe, viable air traffic

system," says Joe Magee, the national officer of the air traffic controllers' union, the IPMS.

Both the U.S. and the U.K. are currently modernising their control equipment but even that is proving problematic. The U.S. is planning to update its system with \$1 billion-worth of new automated equipment over the next 10 years. It is also considering the introduction of a new "free flight" system, which would allow planes to fly directly from A to B without travelling on specific routes and using a global-positioning system for navigation. Some fear that this could make the skies a more dangerous place, rendering the air traffic controllers at best simply monitoring the traffic and at worst obsolete.

But at least one pilot, who refused to be named, said that the main danger for air travellers is not the overworked air traffic controllers, their out-of-date equipment or even the cut-price airlines, but the over-boisterous public. "Our most common problems are with the passengers — who get drunk and violent; who abuse the crew or who try and smoke in the toilets. Get rid of them and we'll be fine."

The Guardian

Arabs call for free trade zone

BEIRUT (R) — Arab states must set up a free trade zone as the first step towards a common market and to confront the challenges of the world's major economic blocs, Arab economic officials have said.

They told a conference on Arab banks and economic reform in Beirut that a key reason for promoting Arab economic cooperation was that bilateral trade treaties — the basis of inter-Arab trade — are void under GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade).

"There are incentives for setting up a free trade zone: The wish to boost political and economic cooperation in the face of major blocs, economic changes at the international level, especially GATT, and the conviction that economic cooperation can improve economic conditions," said Bourhan Dajani, secretary-general of the Union of Arab Chambers of Commerce.

The officials reminded the 240 bankers and financiers that Arab leaders stressed at a Cairo summit in June the importance of setting up an Arab free zone as the first step towards a common Arab market.

But Hassan Ibrahim, secretary-general of the Arab Economic Unity Council, said the 10-year period suggested for establishing the zone was far too long and the project still lacked an effective mechanism for implementation.

He said the project should begin "by immediate, total and comprehensive libera-

tion of trade, with reasonable exceptions for sensitive goods."

"These exceptions must be terminated during a reasonable period so they do not impede the goal from liberating trade," Mr. Ibrahim said.

Mr. Dajani said a free trade zone was necessitated by the fact that Arab states had almost similar economic systems after two decades of economic reforms and structural adjustments.

"The Arab states have witnessed a convergence between their economic systems...making the possibility of setting up an Arab free trade zone acceptable, even required," he said.

"The experiment of the common Arab market (in 1964) which Arab states experienced fell short of achieving its goals due to differences in the economic systems at the time and since tariffs were not unified vis-a-vis the outside world," he said.

The European common market and the South American common market, both of which began as free trade zones, showed how regional economic cooperation can boost trade and foreign investments, Mr. Dajani said.

He said the economic integration of the south American common market caused trade between its members to quadruple.

Their exports to Europe, the United States and Japan rose to \$29.2 billion in 1994 from \$15.5 billion in 1990, Mr. Dajani added.

OPEC gambles on the market and wins, for now

VIENNA (R) — OPEC meetings are humdrum affairs these days.

This week's ministerial talks in Vienna of the Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), beginning Wednesday, will be no exception.

The 11-member oil producers' group is widely expected to make no changes in its 25.03 million barrels per day (bpd) production ceiling and to roll over current quotas despite high prices and increased demand for its crude.

The oil market is not expected to take much notice, since it has been so long since OPEC has really done anything directly to affect oil prices.

Gone are the heady days of the 1970s and 1980s when ministers from the once-mighty producers' group dictated the price of oil from their luxury hotel suites.

These days, OPEC prefers to let market forces lead the way and this year it has worked in favour of the oil exporters.

"OPEC is less relevant at the moment since most traders assume a rollover. They would be happy if OPEC kept the meeting low key and didn't make any waves," said Nigel Saperia, managing director of oil trading at Bankers Trust International in London.

OPEC has not tampered with its quotas since September 1993, so long ago that analysts wonder if the group will ever be able to set realistic production levels again.

When OPEC ministers in June backed away from long-held promises to make room for Iraqi oil exports and merely assigned Baghdad a higher quota while freezing, not cutting, their own output, oil market pundits had predicted weaker oil prices.

But Middle East political tensions, unexpected shortfalls in non-OPEC supplies and economic growth-led demand increases last month pushed crude oil to its highest price since 1991.

Prices have eased a couple of dollars since then but are still \$5 a barrel above where they were last year.

Despite producing about one million bpd over their ceiling, OPEC members will earn \$30 billion more in oil revenue than they had expected at the start of 1996.

"We have been very lucky this year but we can not take credit for it at all," an OPEC official said.

Even though the market could probably take some more OPEC oil, especially if the winter is harsh and demand for heating oil strong, Saudi Arabia, OPEC and the world's largest oil producer, is not keen to tamper with the ceiling.

The kingdom reckons typical OPEC bickering over how to divide any increases is not worth the bother.

Oil analysts say that if Saudi Arabia rose above its long-held 8.0 million bpd quota, the market would react bearishly.

"There are some traders

who know nothing else but that Saudi Arabia has a quota of eight million barrels per day, so to some it would be bearish as hell for the Saudis to go up," said Vahan Zanyan, a director at the Washington-based Petroleum Finance Corp (PFC).

Iran, OPEC's second largest producer, is also against an increase.

Iranian Oil Minister Gholamreza Aghazadeh cited the possible return of Iraq to world oil markets and uncertainties over winter weather as reasons for his caution.

Last week, United Nations diplomats said a long-delayed plan to ease sanctions on Iraq, allowing it to sell oil for the first time since it invaded Kuwait in August 1990,

could be implemented by the first quarter of 1997.

The return of Iraqi oil may coincide with an increase in output from non-OPEC producers and hit the market at a time demand seasonally falls, traders say.

Analysts and many OPEC delegates argue that individual quotas are irrelevant anyway since nearly all members — with the notable exception of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates — are pumping out as much oil as they possibly can.

"Quotas are irrelevant when there are only a couple of OPEC members who could actually produce more anyway," said Leo Drollas, chief economist at the Centre for Global Energy Stud-

ies. Though OPEC actions have not had much impact on prices in recent years, the fact that four of its members — Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the UAE and Iraq — are sitting on the world's only unused production capacity fortify its role as oil's swing producer.

"The core members of OPEC are relevant because they hold the key to lower, if not higher, prices. If they would unleash their unused capacity, it could devastate this market," said Bo Van Wijk, vice president, Energy Risk Management at UBS in Zurich.

"But at the moment they choose to play price not politics so they are resisting the temptation to pump it out," he said.

REUTERS

REUTERS

The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates Prices as at 24/11/96 20:20

Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	NLS	FRF
US Dollar	1.4889	0.5983	1.2680	111.20	1.3415	1508.80	1.6808	5.0657	
DE Mark	0.6672		0.8435	74.20	0.8944	1007.53	1.1207	3.3786	
GB Sterling	1.6715	2.5066		2.1138	185.99	2.2423	2526.93	2.8095	8.4720
CHF Franc	0.7899	118.25	0.4719		87.76	1.0586	1193.54	132.92	3.9966
JP Yen	0.0090	1.3473	0.5373	1.1369		1.2054	13.56	151.04	4.5542
CA Dollar	0.7454	1.1173	0.4456	0.9425	1.21		1124.69	1.2637	3.7784
IT Lira	0.0007	0.9925	0.3959	0.0638	1359.25	0.8880		11.13	3.3553
NL Guilder	0.5950	89.19	0.3555	75.29	66.11	0.7975	897.49		3.0134
FR Franc	0.1974	0.2958	0.1180	24.9581	21.92	0.2646	33.16	33.1600	

Energy	Last	Previous
Brent	23.30	23.50
W. Texas	23.30	24.10
Bony	23.30	23.50
Dubai	21.10	21.85
UL Gas	217.00	219.00

Mid-East Currencies	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY
SA Riyal	0.2686	0.4000	0.15956	0.33794	29.8789
AE Dirham	0.2723	0.40861	0.16299	0.34521	30.3177
KW Dinar	3.3501	5.02513	2.00441	4.24448	372.856
BH Dinar	0.3770	3.97772	1.5868	3.56134	295.159
CY Pound	2.1842	3.2775	1.307	2.7655	243.04

Metal Prices	Bid	Offer
Gold (oz's)	379	379.5
Silver (oz's)	4.91	4.93
Platinum (oz's)	384.5	385.5
AL (3 Months)	1433	1436
CU (3 Months)	2136	2141
Zinc (3 Months)	1058	1058
Lead (3 Months)	717	718
NI (3 Months)	6675	6685

Currency Deposit Rates (Bid)	Period	1	2	3	6	9	1
US Dollar	Month	Months	Months	Months	Months	Months	Year
USD	5.21	5.37	5.39	5.37	5.36		
GBP	5.88	6.37	6.58	6.82	6.88		
JPY	0.34	0.35	0.41	0.41	0.56		
DEM	3.00	3.10	3.10	3.00	3.08		
FRF	3.32	3.34	3.41	3.45	3.50		
CHF	1.85	1.88	1.81	1.83	2.00		
ITL	7.45	7.21	6.90	6.70	6.82		

Main Equity Indices							
Bourse	Index	Value	Chng	% Chng	High	Low	Pr Cls
New York	DOW JONES	6333.87	-14.16	-0.22	6358.09	6332.75	6348.03
New York	S&P 500	734.88	-2.74	-0.37	738.17	734.82	737.82
London	FT-SE 100	3982.1	3.9	0.1	3966.4	3952.2	3958.2
Tokyo	NIKKEI 225	20796.37	-13.36	-0.64	20940.2	20773.3	20929.7
Paris	CAC 40	2229.68	-10.65	-0.48	2235.38	2223.81	2240.33
Frankfurt	DAX	2763.84	-31.96	-1.14	2793.27	2763.84	2796.8

Energy	Last	Delivery
Commodity	121.17	Spot
Coffee (c/lb)	121.17	Spot
Cocoa (5/ton)	1385	Spot
Sugar (5/ton)	307	Spot
Wheat (5/ton)	140	Spot
Soya (c/lb)	22.23	Spot
Ten (5/100)	118	Spot
Barley (5/100)	2.21	Spot
Rice (5/ton)	470	Spot

JOD Cross Rates	Buy	Sell
US Dollar	0.708	0.710
GB Sterling	1.1783	1.1842
DE Mark	0.4694	0.4717
CHF Franc	0.5541	0.5589
FR Franc	0.1389	0.1396
JP Yen	0.6365	0.6397
NL Guilder	0.4185	0.4206
IT Lira	0.4662	0.4685

Arab states urged to give way to private sector

Abu Dhabi (AFP) — Arab governments should hand over public enterprises to the private sector to boost its role in the economy as part of reforms, a top Arab monetary official has said.

Jassim Al Manai, chairman of the Abu Dhabi-based Arab Monetary Fund (AMF), said the public sector in most of the Arab League's 22 members remained a dominant force in the

economy, accounting for more than 40 per cent.

"Arab states have a long way to go in the privatisation of public institutions," he told the United Arab Emirates weekly al Eqtisadi.

"The Arab public sector should be confined to the role of supervision and organisation to ensure a greater contribution by the private sector," he added.

Several Arab countries

have been locked in reforms to tackle economic problems, including debt, inflation, slow growth and financial deficits.

But some of them have been under fire for slowing the pace of such programmes and their reluctance to give the private sector a bigger share.

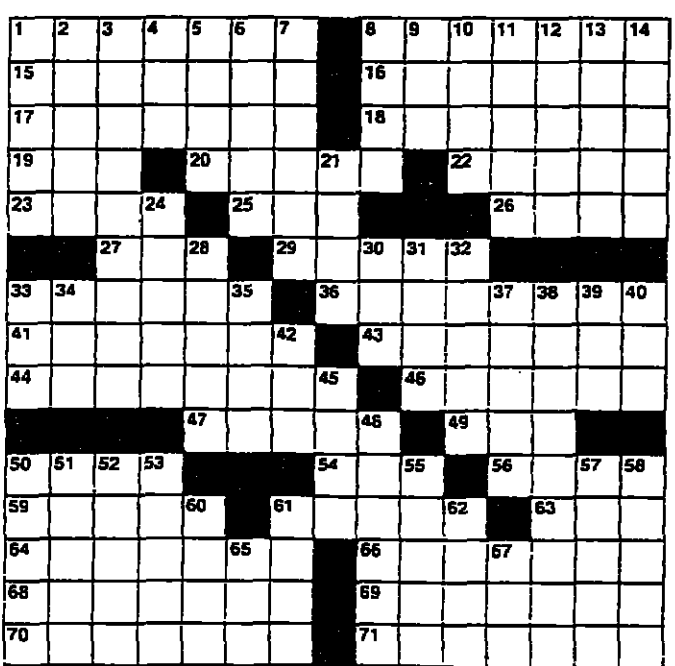
The AMF, a regional IMF-style institution, has sought to encourage its members to press ahead

with reforms by extending more loans, organising economic training programmes and providing technical assistance.

"There are several indications showing some Arab states are moving in the right direction... there is now a climate characterised by a tendency to apply clear and realistic economic policies," Mr. Manai said.

THE Daily Crossword by Glenton Petgrave

- ACROSS**
- Wild duck
 - Social climber
 - Pacific islands, as a group
 - Conference
 - Last longer than
 - Scholarly
 - African land: abbr.
 - Enlist
 - Breaks in
 - Headless
 - Hanks
 - Young men
 - Wheel part
 - Niamey's land
 - Symbolic birds
 - Did again
 - Short song
 - Cultivated land
 - Refresh mentally
 - Youthful
 - Apparel
 - Cow relative
 - Fee
 - Surprise words
 - Tale
 - Like some walls
 - Ring stones
 - Cravat
 - Candy
 - Vague feeling of discomfort
 - Classy
 - Unfolded
 - Overnight flights
 - Becomes intense



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- DOWN**
- Lowed
 - Mentally sharp
 - Lazy
 - Vegas
 - Poker stake
 - Merry
 - Ohio city
 - Advantage taker
 - Capita
 - Pornography
 - Wave
 - Soul
 - Assessed
 - Lock of hair

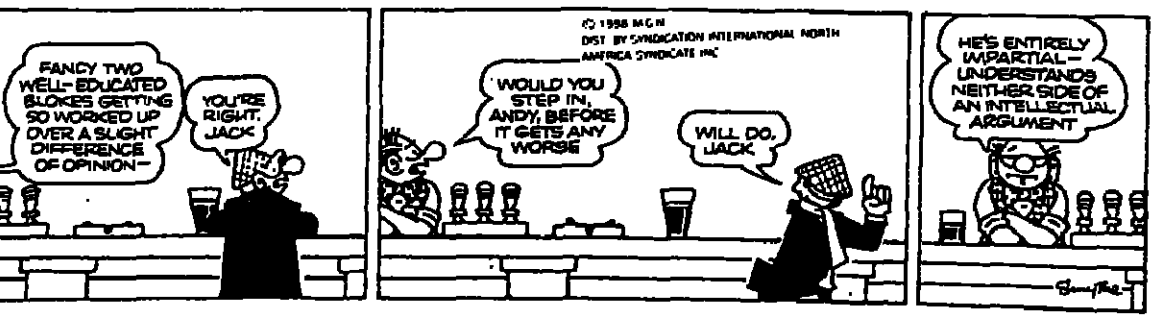
21 Middle East prince	57 Gotten up	62 Blackthorn
24 Office worker	58 Things lacking	63 Small bill
28 Allotted	60 Cart	67 High mountain
30 Receive	61 Decides on	
31 Extended narrative poem		
32 Transmuted		
33 Cup handle		
34 Exist		
35 Prima ballena, e.g.		
37 Put to rest		
38 Long-winded		
39 Conceit		
40 Moisture		
42 Bothered		
45 Employees empowerment plan: abbr.		
48 Disgraced		
50 Jungle cat		
51 Seedlet		
52 Treated a lawn		
53 Shell		
55 Bondman		

Jordan times
Tel :
684311,699634

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



HOROSCOPE FORECAST FOR MONDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 1996

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll-Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) You have some responsibility to handle today before you can get your activities scheduled right. Later this evening you can meet with close friends for recreational activities which are quite enjoyable.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Handle an outside affair early today, so that you can have time to see good friends who understand you. This evening will be good for seeking out knowledgeable persons who have the advice to make a new project quite easy.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Your routine career activities do not seem to go right so think about improving your public and civic duties. Later this evening will be good for consulting a bigwig for suggestions on how to make your career more successful.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Study into practical new interests today and don't forget this for pleasure. Contact a new acquaintance later this evening and consult with this person for ways to make any projects you are assigned are successful.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Something comes up today which can prevent having the pleasure you had anticipated. Make your mate happy later this evening by surprising him or her with some small token of your affection and appreciation.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Don't mope at home today, since you can easily gain acclaim at civic matters. You have much charm and fine self-expression so use these assets to make your career activities more prosperous and successful.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Give that correspondence more thought today before you answer it, since the news contained within could cause you difficulties. The evening can be very delightful for you, if you spend this time with your loved ones.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Get your business affairs handled efficiently today, so that a bigwig will notice your capabilities and praise you on your efforts. You can show your mate a very fine time tonight by taking him or her to some place special.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Try to please those at home today by doing what they like and thereby you can avoid any confrontation. Treat company which you have into your home charmingly and have fun tonight with them.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Be with dynamic yet understanding friends today who can be helpful to you. Get your health improved this evening since you have a busy week ahead and you want to be at your very best to handle any difficulties.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Don't permit close friends to get your off the track today of important career activities or you could get into difficulty with those in authority. Carry through with your practical affairs later this evening and make your life successful.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Steer clear of public annoyances today and go after what you personally want the most in your career activities. Be careful in speech making activities or you could say something which could be misinterpreted by others.

Birthstone of November: Topaz — Tiger's Eye.

Israeli restrictions limit Palestinian imports from Jordan to only \$3 million

AMMAN (Petra) — The head of a Palestinian economic and trade delegation, currently on a visit to Jordan, said Sunday that the Palestinian Trade Promotion Corporation (PTPC) has issued \$20 million worth of licences to import products from Jordan, but has only been able to buy \$3 million

worth of goods from the Kingdom. Said Haifa, who is the director of PTPC, attributed the limited volume of imports from Jordan to the restrictions imposed by Israel on commercial exchange between Jordan and Palestine.

Draft 1997 budget envisages JD23.8 million surplus for first time in many years

WITH AN estimated total revenues, including grants, of JD1,859.8 million and an estimated total expenditures of JD1,836.0 million, the 1997 budget will have a JD23.8 million surplus for the first time since many years. The draft budget was based on curbing government spending and reducing the amount of subsidy allocated for foodstuffs to JD48 million.

The local revenues were estimated at JD1,631.0 million from optimising income from taxes, fees, returns, dividends, refundable interest and other sources of income. The total current revenues amounted to JD1,783.0 million with a JD377,000 of surplus in the current budget.

The 1997 budget is 5.4 per cent, or JD95 million, higher than the 1996 budget which totalled JD1,764.0 million. According to the 1997 draft budget, the JD1,631 million local revenues are to come from the following sources:

- 1) JD155 million from income tax and "profits"
- 2) JD605 million from customs
- 3) JD126.5 million from "additional taxes"
- 4) JD30 million from other taxes
- 5) JD77.3 million from licences
- 6) JD172.6 million from fees
- 7) JD7.6 million from telegram, post and telephone charges
- 8) JD35 million from returns and dividends
- 9) JD16 million from refundable interest
- 10) JD405 million from other revenues

Additional revenues were listed as JD152 million from financial grants, JD60 million recoverable loan instalments and JD16.8 million from technical assistance to finance development projects.

On the expenditure side, the recurrent government spending for various ministries and departments was estimated at JD584.1 million for next year. The other JD 520.8 million are to be spent on the following areas:

- 1) JD48 million on foodstuff subsidies
- 2) JD2 million on relief for displaced persons
- 3) JD4.5 million on emergency spending needs
- 4) JD2.1 million in interest on local loans
- 5) JD156 million in interest on foreign loans
- 6) JD204 million for retirement and indemnities
- 7) JD6.5 million for social security
- 8) JD21 million for general expenditure
- 9) JD43 million for supporting various institutions
- 10) JD12.8 million for scientific scholarships (Al Ra'i)

President Haidar Murad and members of chambers of commerce, Mr. Haifa reviewed the volume of commercial exchange between Palestine and Jordan, saying that the total Palestinian imports from Jordan in 1980 amounted to \$5.1 million, compared with \$517.7 million from Israel.

He added that exports to Jordan amounted to JD 101.8 million, compared with \$224.4 million to Israel. Mr. Haifa and Mr. Murad stressed the need for forging closer cooperation and coordination between the private sectors in both countries.

Mr. Murad stressed the importance of Jordanian-Palestinian coordination and cooperation saying that it will help both countries face up to the new chal-

Arab banks can boost foreign capital inflow — union report

BEIRUT (R) — The Arab banking sector has a vital role to play in increasing the flow of foreign investment into the Arab World, the Union of Arab Banks has said.

"One of the current and future challenges facing Arab banks is their ability to capitalise on growing international interest in the Arab region as a worthy investment area," it said in a report to an Arab banking conference in Beirut.

"The Arab banks are urged, in view of this fact, to work to increase the volume of investment flows into the Arab World on several sectors, the first of which is developing the base of their investment products and instruments," the report added.

It said direct foreign investments into Arab states rose to \$1.8 billion in 1994 from \$1.7 billion in 1993, but both figures were less than one per cent of private international investments.

The Arab banking sector should become the main player and the motor of the Arab capital markets and should issue Eurobonds on international capital markets, the report said.

"These steps by the banks can boost the Arab World's position as an important investment region and contribute to attracting both expatriate and foreign capital and investments," it said.

Arab banks' share in financing Arab economies increased by 14.9 per cent in 1995 to \$254 billion, mainly through project finance and syndicated loans for major investment projects, the

Russia issues first bond since 1917

LONDON (AFP) — Russia has issued its first international bond since the 1917 October revolution, raising a billion dollars on the global financial markets through a five-year Eurobond.

The historic issue, which marks Russia's return to the international capital markets, had been expected since the beginning of this year. But it was twice the size expected by financial experts.

One analyst with a U.S. investment bank said that the bond, which had been expected to raise \$500 million, had attracted "very high demand," but another said investors in New York had given it a "comparatively lukewarm response."

The Russian sovereign bond issue, which comes to maturity on Nov. 27, 2001, offered investors a premium of 345 basis points (3.45 percentage points) over the five-year U.S. treasury bond.

Russia has a BB minus rating from Standard and Poor's rating agency, and a BA2 rating from Moody's Investor Services.

During the Soviet period, state organisations issued international bonds but the state itself was not present on the international capital markets as it had been during Tsarist times.

The Russian sovereign bond issue was organised by Swiss-owned London-based finance house SBC Warburg and U.S. investment bank, J.P. Morgan.

The huge size of Russia's external debt had prevented the bond issue until now, but the country has practically resolved its obligations towards both commercial and state creditors.

However, bonds issued before the 1917 revolution and held by French investors have not been redeemed and an association representing these investors continues to agitate strongly against the

return of Russian issues.

Russia's total foreign debt amounts to about \$120 billion of which \$103 billion was inherited from the former Soviet Union.

Financial experts in London said that the sovereign debt issue had opened the way for the Russian state and companies to tap the international capital markets.

"It opens up the market for a lot of new issues, from the government and other issuers," said Philip Poole, chief economist at investment bank ING Barings.

He added that the issue was "really filling a niche in the market."

Russian gas giant, Gazprom, which owns a quarter of the world's natural gas reserves, is planning soon to launch a Eurobond issue worth between \$250 and \$500 million.

The company, which last month sold one per cent of its share capital to

international investors, raising about \$400 million, would be the first Russian company to tap into the Eurobond market.

Russia's path to the international capital markets was eased after it negotiated a rescheduling of its debts with its various creditors.

In April, the Club of Paris of state creditors reached a deal with Russia over the rescheduling of debt of \$40 billion over 25 years.

Then in September, Deutsche Bank announced that almost all of Russia's 600-odd creditor banks had approved a wide-ranging deal on rescheduling Russian debt developed by the bank's representatives last November.

The banks had agreed to reschedule more than \$24 billion in principal over 25 years with a seven-year grace period, and the interest, about \$5 billion, will be paid by way of bonds to be issued starting next year.

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET											
HOUSING BANK CENTER AMMAN - SHAMSAN											
TELEPHONE: 607171 / 607179											
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SUNDAY 24/11/1996											
PAST 12 MONTHS		COMPANY'S NAME	P / E	DIV.	NO. OF SHARES	NO. OF TRANS.	VALUE TRADED	OPEN PRICE	CLOSE PRICE	CHANGE	
HIGH	LOW										
252.000	205.000	ARAB BANK	13.5	1.42	7	160	39490	247.00	246.50	-.50	
1.250	1.250	MID. EAST INV. BK.	67.7	0.00	11	27150	26211	1.04	1.03	-.01	
5.250	4.250	THE HOUSING BK.	12.6	2.92	2	1750	8260	4.75	4.72	-.03	
3.040	2.450	JOR. KIWAT BANK	17.7	0.00	1	150	368	2.50	2.45	-.05	
1.200	1.200	JOR. GULF BANK	7.43	0.00	19	129500	12130	95	94	-.01	
4.180	3.300	JOR. ISLAMIC BANK	17.4	0.00	9	2327	844	3.64	3.63	-.01	
3.900	3.000	JOR. INV. FIN. BANK	17.6	0.00	2	350	1138	3.24	3.25	+.01	
BANK SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 188.16 %CHG: -0.26 74 161687 207813											
2.910	1.840	JOR. FRENCH INSUR.	5.2	10.81	1	250	463	1.84	1.85	+.01	
INSURANCE SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 117.95 %CHG: -0.05 1 250 463											
1.900	1.450	JOR. ELECTRIC PWR.	10.8	7.74	6	675	1046	1.56	1.55	-.01	
1.960	1.080	NATL. PORTFOLIO	9	0.00	8	2720	3066	1.14	1.12	-.02	
2.300	1.610	MID. EAST HOTELS	67.6	0.00	6	2100	3349	1.65	1.57	-.08	
3.660	3.130	ARAB INTL. INV. BODC.	13.8	5.71	9	2800	9800	3.52	3.50	-.02	
1.270	.960	CARMA EDUCATION	9	0.00	7	2300	2369	1.04	1.04	0.00	
2.430	1.690	UNIFIED CO.	9.0	5.85	1	500	855	1.72	1.71	-.03	
1.200	.820	UNION LAND DEV.	8	0.00	11	8055	7096	.88	.89	+.01	
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 107.17 %CHG: -0.58 48 19120 27601											
3.770	3.060	JOR. CEMENT FACT.	18.5	3.10	14	5154	16848	3.26	3.23	-.03	
3.550	2.710	JOR. PROSPERITY MINES	32.3	0.00	4	768	2302	3.00	3.00	0.00	
5.960	4.780	ARAB POTASH CO.	17.2	3.53	3	200	1134	5.70	5.67	-.03	
10.550	8.720	JOR. PETROL. REFINERY	9.3	8.70	12	1834	16872	9.19	9.20	+.01	
3.750	1.650	INDUSTRIAL COMM. AGR.	26.8	0.00	2	269	529	1.97	1.97	0.00	
8.150	6.420	JOR. WASTED MILLS	8.8	3.62	1	150	1035	6.90	6.90	0.00	
4.870	3.050	ARAB PHARM. MANF.	16.8	6.54	19	3045	9362	3.10	3.06	-.04	
2.600	2.050	JORDAN DAIRY	13.2	6.98	2	130	280	2.15	2.15	0.00	
5.800	3.130	ARAB ALUM. IND.	8.0	9.32	1	300	966	2.22	2.22	0.00	
.960	.450	LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	9	0.00	76	73648	42532	.58	.56	-.02	
1.500	1.060	ARAB PAPER CONV. TRD.	7.6	9.25	11	4100	4665	1.13	1.12	-.01	
1.090	.590	NATIONAL INDUS.	8.1	10.91	3	300	163	.55	.55	0.00	
1.840	.930	INTERNED. PETRO. CHEM.	9	0.00	4	2600	2496	.98	.96	-.02	
4.250	2.130	NATL. CABLE WIRE. MFAC	13.1	0.00	3	350	756	2.16	2.16	0.00	
1.910	1.080	ARAB PHARM. CHEM.	21.3	0.00	14	4764	5424	1.18	1.14	-.04	
3.280	1.460	UNIV. MOON. IND.	4.4	13.79	29	11650	17006	1.48	1.45	-.03	
2.100	1.140	JOR. IND. RESOURCES	15.7	0.00	44	16050	20195	1.29	1.25	-.04	
1.580	.870	JOR. NEW CABLE CO.	23.1	0.00	14	8250	4488	.88	.85	-.03	
2.460	1.750	EL. & W. READY WEAR	9	0.00	16	8211	15818	1.92	1.94	+.02	
1.460	.980	INTL. TOBACCO	27.3	0.00	28	20760	24043	1.17	1.16	-.01	
1.740	.930	UNION CH. & VEG.	23.4	0.00	6	1553	1475	.95	.95	0.00	
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 109.50 %CHG: -0.52 306 161126 188286											
GRAND TOTAL INDEX: 146.69 %CHG: -0.37 429 342183 424163											
PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SUNDAY 24/11/1996											
N	800	510	JOR. TRADE PAC.	13.6	0.00	3	1000	510	.52	.51	-.01
N	950	480	NATL. COOPER. CENTERS	9	0.00	11	5150	2575	.50	.50	0.00
N	930	700	UNION INV. SOI	67.0	0.00	13	26780	7355	.71	.70	-.01
N	1110	400	ARAB FIN. INVEST.	9	0.00	10	8800	3459	.40	.39	-.01
N	950	680	AL-DAMLIYAH 751	15.8	0.00	6	1724	775	.71	.70	-.01
N	1000	340	JOR. IND. WATER SUPPLY	13.2	0.00	2	250	280	2.15	2.15	0.00
N	860	510	ARAB FOOD & MED.	8	0.00	6	3218	1916	.59	.60	+.01
N	1760	1300	NATL. CHLORINE	8	0.00	6	2800	3270	1.30	1.30	0.00
N	1000	520	NATL. TEXTILE	8	0.00	8	2950	1625	.68	.65	-.03
N	1100	420	NATL. MULT. ENG. NAMICO	8	0.00	24	36050	14554	.42	.40	-.02
N	810	430	HAYRAK DIES & MOULDS	8	0.00	1	250	125	.53	.50	-.03
N	1080	710	JORDAN STEEL	8	0.00	8	5142	3753	.94	.73	-.01
N	780	430	ARAB ELECT. IND.	9	0.00	4	4500	2160	.48	.48	0.00
N	1320	1020	UNION TOBACCO 751	8	0.00	6	6700	5293	1.04	1.04	0.00
N	840	570	RAZI PHARM. 651	8	0.00	7	5700	1291	.58	.58	0.00
N	830	400	INDS. ENG.	24.0	0.00	4	850	338	.40	.39	-.01
N	1430	770	INDS. CERAMIC	8	0.00	5	1137	875	.78	.77	-.01
N	880	590	NATL. POULTRY	8	0.00	3	10800	6804	.62	.63	+.01
N	950	600	ARAB INT. FOOD FACT.	56.2	0.00	2	15043	12034	.90	.80	-.10
N	1500	530	MID-EAST COMPLEX	7.6	0.00	14	60500	29690	.64	.65	+.01
GRAND TOTAL INDEX: 142 208964 108472											
+ = New 12 months low N = Listed during the past 12 months P = P/E ratio 100 or more G = Negative P/E E = Earning is zero or N/A for the most recent year											

THE BETTER HALF. By Glasbergen

"That's your idea of planning for the future—next week's TV Guide?"

JUMBLE THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Henri Arnold and Mike Arghon

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

DUESE

POASY

TAMENG

ZERBAL

Print answer here: A

Yesterday's Jumbles: AMUSE CHANT PREFIX IMBUED
Answer: The sympathetic bartender was also this — A MIX MASTER

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Ramtha meet Wihdat today in Jordan Cup final

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Al Ramtha will be aiming for the third of the season's soccer titles when they face Al Wihdat in the Jordan Cup final Monday afternoon.

After Al Faisali clinched the season-opener Cup Winners' Cup, Al Ramtha won the Federation Shield and now have a shot at the Cup which they last won in 1990 and 1991.

Titleholders and current Premier League leaders Al Wihdat, had eliminated Al Hussein on their way to the final while Al Ramtha defeated Al Ahli who had knocked out nine-time winners Al Faisali in the earlier round.

Twenty-four Premier League and first division teams took part in the knockout Jordan Cup competition.

Wihdat maintain lead, Qoqazi score first win

After the Jordan Cup concludes Monday, only Premier League action remains on the Jordan Soccer Federation's agenda.

With the conclusion of the 12th week of the competition, Al Wihdat remained atop the standings while bottom-placed Al Qoqazi moved up one place to 9th with their first win 2-1 over Kufroum.

Wihdat maintained their lead after a 2-0 win over Al Qadissieh. Al Faisali trail closely behind in second place following a 2-1 win over Shabab Al Hussein who are now 7th.

Al Ramtha remained third after they were held to a 2-2 draw with fourth placed

Competition record (runner up in brackets)

1980 — Faisali (Baqaa)
1981 — Faisali (Ramtha)
1982 — Wihdat (Ahli)
1983 — Faisali (Ramtha)
1984 — Jazireh (Ahli)
1985 — Wihdat (Faisali)
1986 — Arabi (Jazireh)
1987 — Faisali (Hussein)
1988 — Wihdat (Faisali)
1989 — Faisali (Ramtha)
1990 — Ramtha (Hussein)
1991 — Ramtha (Wihdat)
1992 — Faisali (Wihdat)
1993 — Faisali (Ramtha)
1994 — Faisali (Ramtha)
1995 — Faisali (Ramtha)

Schedule of 13th week (All matches start at 2:30)

Wed. 27/11S. Hussein-Jazireh
Thurs. 28/11 Qadissieh - Faisali
Fri. 29/11 Qoqazi - Ahli
Kufroum - Ramtha
Wihdat-Hussein

Al Hussein while Al Jazireh-Al Ahli match ended in a goalless draw.
The most-awaited match in the 13th week includes the clash of Al Hussein and Al Wihdat Friday.

The rest of the matches are relatively easy match-ups however they might have a significant impact on teams vying to improve their standing or move away from the relegation zone.

Standings before 13th week

Team	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
Wihdat	12	8	3	1	24	5	27
Faisali	12	7	4	1	20	8	25
Ramtha	12	6	4	2	17	10	22
Hussein	12	5	6	1	19	13	21
Ahli	12	4	6	2	22	15	18
Qadissieh	12	2	6	4	15	19	12
S. Hussein	12	2	4	6	12	22	10
Jazireh	12	2	4	6	5	12	10
Qoqazi	12	1	3	8	10	25	6
Kufroum	12	-	6	6	9	24	6



New Zealand's Claudia Riegler skis during the second round of the Women's World Cup Slalom competition in Park City, Utah (Reuters photo)

Riegler wins women's slalom

PARK CITY (R) — Stamping herself a star of the future, 20-year-old Claudia Riegler of New Zealand won the season's first World Cup slalom for women Saturday.

Riegler's second career victory came with a total time of 1:36.50 on a soft course which held up well following a rainstorm the previous day.

With a strong second run, Pernilla Wiberg of Sweden made it close 1:36.57. Ingrid Salvenmoser of Austria, who had the best second-run time, leaped from 10th to third in 1:37.49.

Riegler, another of those expatriates who left the powerful Austrian team in frustration, has enjoyed a meteoric career in two seasons under the New Zealand banner, with five finishes in the top 10 last season.

Riegler's victory deprived Wiberg of a ninth career slalom victory.

Basler gives Bayern Bundesliga lead

BONN (R) — Two goals from Mario Basler gave Bayern Munich a narrow 2-1 victory over bottom placed Hansa Rostock Saturday but it was enough to move them to top of the Bundesliga.

The Germany midfielder converted a penalty in the 31st minute after Jurgen Klinsmann was brought down in the box.

He added a spectacular second from 25 metres two minutes before the interval. The win allowed Bayern to leapfrog over previous leaders VfB Stuttgart, and Bayer Leverkusen, who began the day in second place but lost 3-1 away to St. Pauli.

But Bayern's perfectionist coach Giovanni Trapattoni was far from pleased with his side's showing.

"I'm only happy with the result," the former Internazionale boss said.

"We didn't play good football, we looked nervous and inhibited. I only liked 20 minutes of the game."

Trapattoni knows Bayern will have to raise their game considerably for next weekend's clash with Stuttgart. His Rostock counterpart, Frank Pagelsdorf, felt his side were unlucky not to take a point from Saturday's game.

"We were 2-0 down although Bayern hadn't even had a proper scoring chance," he said. "But we never lost our shape and had a few chances so I thought we deserved a draw."

While Bayern looked unconvincing and Leverkusen's 10-game unbeaten run came to an end at St. Pauli, champions Borussia Dortmund moved ominously up to third place with an impressive 4-0 demolition of Werder Bremen.

Swiss star Stephane Chapuisat set Dortmund on their way with an early goal and his strike partner Heiko Herrlich added two more before the break to put them firmly in the driving seat.

Bremen's misery was completed by a second-half own goal from Heimo Pfeifenberger.

"We had more luck than Bremen," said Dortmund coach Ottmar Hitzfeld, who has managed to keep his side in touch with the league leaders despite injuries to the likes of Paulo Sousa, Matthias Sammer and Steffen Freund.

"The first goal gave us confidence and then it was difficult for Bremen to play well," he added.

Dortmund now lie just two points behind Bayern and have also secured a place in the European Cup quarter-finals.

Hamburg's European prospects look considerably more bleak after their UEFA Cup first leg defeat in Monaco but Felix Magath's side secured a point away to in-form Cologne.

The home side were happy enough with their point, especially after goalkeeper Antonio Ananyev was sent off in the last minute for a hefty tackle.

With no replacement goalkeeper on the bench, Cologne had to rely on Nigerian midfielder Sunday Ojish to keep a clean sheet for the final 60 seconds.

Becker faces another showdown with Sampras

HANOVER (R) — Boris Becker toyed with the nerves of his excitable home fans before moving towards a dream final against World No. 1 Pete Sampras at the ATP world tennis championship on Saturday.

Becker, the defending champion, needed to come back from behind to clinch a 6-7, 7-6, 6-3 semifinal victory over Wimbledon champion Richard Krajicek who at times threatened to spoil the party that the German has enjoyed all week.

But the three-times Wimbledon champion, who turned 29 on Friday, was swept to victory in two hours and 11 minutes by 15,000 partisan German fans who roared his every move and chanted his name like a football crowd.

Sampras also had to come back from behind to tame big-serving Goran Ivanisevic, one of the most awkward customers on a fast court, in the first semifinal. The American won 6-7, 7-6, 7-5 to set up a repeat of the 1994.

Sampras will be trying to stop Becker winning three consecutive matches against him. The Australian Open champion won their group match on Thursday and also beat the U.S. Open champion over five sets in the final of last month's Stuttgart Open.

"I hope I can play like I did against him Thursday," Becker said. "My concentration was not 100 percent today. My mind was all over the place in the first set...But I am happy and thrilled to have reached the final."

Sampras knows that the support of the home crowd



Boris Becker returns a ball during his match against Pete Sampras of the United States at the ATP World Championship final match in Hanover. Becker is the titleholder of last year's ATP Championships (Reuters photo)

gives Becker a lead before he has hit a ball.

"He is very tough to beat from a tennis standpoint but with the crowd it is kind of a Davis Cup atmosphere and it is a little bit tougher on the players," the American said.

Sampras beat Becker in the final in 1994 and also won the event in 1991. Becker has won the championship, which used to be known as the Masters, three times in 1988, 1992 and 1995.

All four semifinalists were big servers and it was no surprise that tiebreaks and nerves played a vital role in both matches on the court which some of the players believe is too fast.

Becker netted a crucial volley in the first set tiebreak of his match against Krajicek to give

the Dutchman a 6-4 lead

and set point. The Wimbledon champion took his chance, taking the next point with an ace.

In the second set tiebreak, the German kept his nerve to take the decider 7-3 with relative ease. He then broke Krajicek's serve to lead 3-1 in the decisive third set and held his serve to take the match.

Sampras also needed to show composure under duress to defeat Ivanisevic in one hour and 55 minutes.

When the first set went to a tiebreak, Ivanisevic, who hit a total of 35 aces in the match compared to Sampras's 17, was the sharper player, soon building up a 6-4 lead for his first set point.

Sampras saved the point after a long rally when

both players were at the back of the court. But when Sampras double-faulted to give Ivanisevic a 7-6 lead, the Croat took his chance to clinch the set with an ace on the next point.

The second set followed a similar pattern. But this time Sampras kept his concentration, sealing the tiebreak 7-4 with a strong serve that Ivanisevic could not return.

The third set was equally close. But in the 12th game Ivanisevic seemed to lose his concentration.

The Croat double-faulted to make it 30-30. Then Sampras hit a superb cross-court forehand to set up match point and clinched victory in the next point when Ivanisevic double-faulted again.

Graf ends Novotna hot streak with three-set win Hingis crushes Majoli's ambitions to reach final

NEW YORK (R) — Steffi Graf stopped the brilliant run of Jana Novotna with a come-from-behind, three-set win to set up a showdown with up-and-comer Martina Hingis in the final of the WTA Chase Championships.

Graf lost the first set and was down a break in the third set of the brilliant battle but raised her game when she needed it most to snap Novotna's 14-match winning streak 4-6, 6-4, 6-3 and reach the final of the elite 16-player event.

"I thought it was a really spectacular match," the 28-year-old Novotna said afterwards. "I gave everything that I had. She was just better at the end."

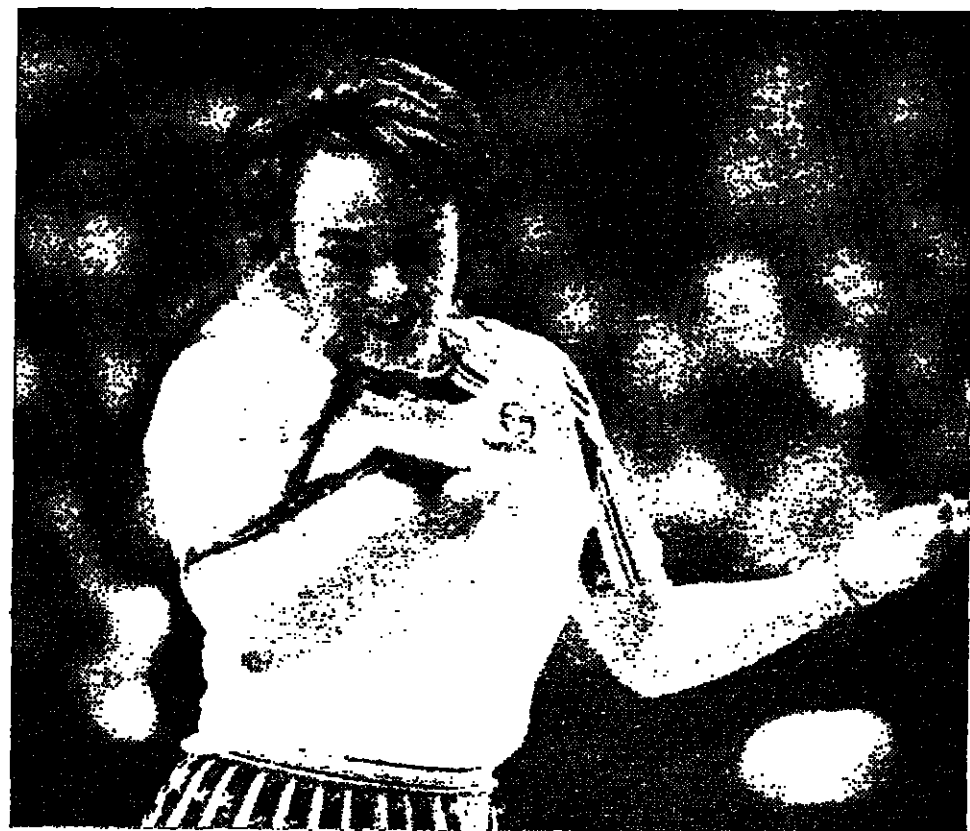
"She's just a great champion."

Graf, who clinched sole possession of World No. 1 in the season-ending rankings with her victory, will meet Hingis who also went three sets but had a far easier time defeating friend and former doubles partner Iva Majoli of Croatia 6-2, 4-6, 6-1.

Graf leads her personal series against Hingis 4-1, losing last may to the rising star in the quarters of the Italian Open and most recently beating her in the fourth round at Wimbledon and in the semifinals of the U.S. Open.

The final brings a \$500,000 prize to the winner.

The defeat ended Novotna's hopes of finishing the season with four successive titles. The Czech, winner of three tournaments in the last five weeks, could have



Switzerland's Martina Hingis returns a shot from Croatia's Iva Majoli in the semifinal of the Chase Championships at New York's Madison Square Garden. Hingis won in three sets (Reuters photo)

moved up to a career best number two ranking if she had beaten Graf.

Graf improved her career record against Novotna to 26-4 but the Czech looked at least her equal until breaking down toward the end of a match that had brought the best out in both players.

With the climactic set on serve in the sixth game, Novotna suffered a mental lapse by letting a floating backhand service return drop in without making a play, and then double-faulted on break point to give Graf a 4-2 lead.

That was all the top-

seeded German needed, as she roared on from that point to claim victory in a one hour, 58 minute battle that saw the best tennis of the tournament so far.

"She really showed she has the capability," said Graf, who quit in the final against Novotna last Sunday in Philadelphia because of back spasms.

"She doesn't make a lot of mistakes any more. There are no easy errors. You have to play well to beat her."

Novotna's slip in the sixth game recalled her third-set collapse in the 1993 Wimbledon final

against Graf, where she double-faulted when she was one point away from taking a 5-1 lead and then never won another game.

But the Czech would not ruminate over her mistakes, instead taking comfort from the sensational shot-making that had typified the match up until the end.

"I couldn't be happier with the way I've been playing," said the fifth-seeded Novotna, who won 101 total points in the match to 100 for Graf. "In the end she was just a better player than I was."

TODAY AT	CINEMA TEL: 634144 PHILADELPHIA PHILADELPHIA 1 THE QUICK & THE DEAD Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	CINEMA TEL: 699238 PLAZA SEAN CONNERY...in THE ROCK (IN DOLBY STEREO) Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	CINEMA TEL: 677420 CONCORD CONCORD "1" INDEPENDENCE DAY (IN DOLBY STEREO) Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:00, 8:15, 10:45 CONCORD "2" BRAVEHEART Shows: 3:15, 6:00, 9:00	Rammoun Theatre & Cinema TEL: 618274 - 618275 Today presents Zawad Weld Awad theatre group in the play entitled Five-Star Government Starring comedians: Mahmoud Saimeh & Hussein Tubeishat play starts 8:30 p.m	Nabil & Hisham's Theatre TEL: 625155 PRESENTS THE SATIRICAL COMEDY Arab Human Rights at 8:30 p.m. Theatre is closed Friday, Saturday & Sunday For reservation please call 625155 - 640155
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1st Division Basketball Championship Ahli, Jazireh clash today

By Aleen Bannayan
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The First Division Basketball Championship enters a crucial stage Monday with the clash of Al Ahli and Al Jazireh — the most important of three scheduled matches.

Al Jazireh's 128-58 win over Al Watani was a clear signal that they were serious about being title contenders for the second consecutive season.

Fans remember how Al Jazireh beat Al Ahli's star-studded team (minus Naser Bushnaq) in last year's first round and gave Al Orthodoxy a hard time before losing by less than 10 points in both rounds.

This year, Al Ahli miss the efforts of their top two stars, Yousef Zaghloul and Marwan Ma'touq (suspended by Al Ahli's board for six months), making it more difficult for their younger lineup to easily win matches the

way they have been accustomed to for decades.

While former team captain Samir Murqus is back on the team, the former champions were not very impressive in their latest match against newcomers Al Yarmouk as Al Ahli only managed a 74-37 win.

Comparing their results with the other top two teams, Al Ahli seem vulnerable to drop to third in this year's championship.

Al Orthodoxy beat Al Yarmouk 133-54 and were impressive in their 77-57 win over Al Jalil even without team captain

Hilal Barakat.

Al Jazireh, on the other hand, could only manage a 66-61 win over Al Jalil but scored their biggest win over undermanned Al Watani who seem to be the least prepared of the six teams and are likely to be the team to finish last and be automatically relegated to the second division.

In Monday's two other matches, Al Jalil and Al Yarmouk will be battling it out to display which team is better prepared to qualify to the final four playoffs, while Al Orthodoxy have an easy match against Al Watani.

STANDINGS

Team	P	W	L	SF	SA	Pts
Ahli	2	2	-	187	82	4
Orthodoxy	2	2	-	210	111	4
Jazireh	2	2	-	194	119	4
Jalil	2	-	2	118	143	2
Yarmouk	2	-	2	91	207	2
Watani	2	-	2	103	241	2

Dettori crowns magnificent year with victory in Japan

TOKYO (R) — Top jockey Frankie Dettori crowned a fabulous year with victory Sunday in the Japan Cup on globe-trotting English-raider Singpiel.

But there was bitter disappointment for French connections of Helissio, the best Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe winner for years but beaten into third in a dead-heat with Strategic Choice, another runner from Britain.

Singspiel, at odds of around 13-2, won by a nose from Japanese-owned and trained fabulous La Fouine, the mount of Mikio Matsunaga.

The win, the first by an English challenger for 10 years, was worth 172 million yen (\$1.54 million) from a total purse of 397 million yen (\$3.57 million), doubling Singspiel's lifetime earnings.

Singspiel, a top class campaigner, won the Canadian International for owner Sheikh Mohammed at Woodbine in September and then followed up with a gallant second to stablemate Pilsudski in the Breeders' Cup turf.

Winning trainer Michael Stoute, enjoying a golden autumn, thrilled to the close finish and then said: "My colt is accustomed to such things. He's been in photos and lost five days was his day."

Dettori, who rode seven winners from seven rides in his historic achievement at Ascot in September, continues to sweep all before him. On Sunday, in front of a 137,000-strong crowd, the Italian-born pilot held on by the narrowest of margins.

"It's been one of the best days of my life," Dettori said. "The Japan Cup is one of the richest races in the world, very famous, very prestigious. It was a great battle and it was a

wonderful race." Arc winners have a poor record in the Japan Cup but Helissio had been hailed in the Ribot and Sea Bird class after his Longchamp victory last month.

But jockey Olivier Peslier came home a respectful one-and-a-quarter lengths behind the first two on Sunday, reporting that the one-day wonder colt had not given him the same feel and had been a little below par.

Trainer Stoute had feared Helissio but felt the year-old Singpiel might have an edge over the less experienced three-year-old on foreign turf and so it proved.

Fabulous La Fouine came to the race with four out of five wins, and although unproved over the 1.5-mile trip ran a fine race in defeat.

Strategic Choice, another much-travelled animal, racing in blinkers for the first time, also performed with credit but no horse has won the Japan Cup from stall one and the jinx remains.

Saintly, the Melbourne Cup winner, was scratched earlier in the day, leaving 15 runners. The gelding had a difficult 14-hour trip from Australia and developed a fever, the Japan Racing Association said.

The Japan Cup is the third-richest race in the world, after the Dubai World Cup and the Breeders' Cup Classic.

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Jazz deal Bulls first loss despite Jordan's 44

SALT LAKE CITY (R) — The Chicago Bulls lost for the first time in 13 games this season, falling 105-100 to the Utah Jazz Saturday despite 44 points by Michael Jordan.

Karl Malone scored 11 of his 36 points in the fourth quarter and the Jazz took advantage of Dennis Rodman's poorly timed temper tantrum to win its fifth straight.

"It was a big win for us," Malone said. "But it was just one game and those guys are still the defending champs."

Bryon Russell and Jeff Hornacek each scored 17 points and John Stockton added 12 and 13 assists for Utah (8-2). Malone added 15 rebounds.

"Well it was a fun game, obviously, playing these guys," Jazz coach Jerry Sloan said. "I think everyone was entertained by what Jordan did and it was very difficult to try and play against them. But our guys I think played extremely hard and fortunately we had the ball bounce our way a couple of times."

Chicago (12-1) fell three games shy of the best unbeaten start in league history, achieved by the 1948-49 Washington Capitols and 1993-94 Houston Rockets.

Utah closed with a 7-2 burst. Rodman, who grabbed 10 rebounds, drew his second technical of the game with 14 seconds left and Chicago trailing 100-98.

Jordan, who scored 27 in the first half, notched 40 or more points for the 146th time in the regular season.

"It was a hard fought game," Jordan said. "I mean everyone talked about defence and (in) the first half each team shot 60

per cent. We couldn't figure out each other and in some ways down the stretch, it was just a gut match."

"You know who got the breaks," said Jordan. "You know we missed some easy shots...They missed some easy shots and they got the last little break (Rodman's ejection) and that was the deciding point of the game."

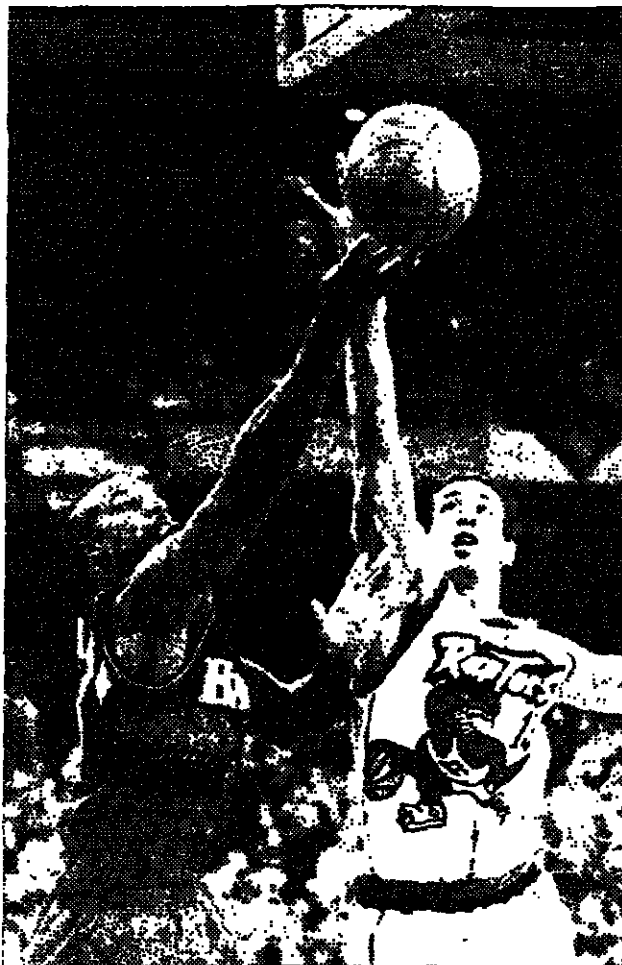
At Golden State, Kevin Willis, subbing for the ailing Hakeem Olajuwon, scored five of Houston's final seven points and Charles Barkley had a triple-double to lift the Rockets to a 120-115 overtime victory over the Golden State Warriors.

Willis started at centre for the second straight game as Olajuwon remains sidelined after being treated for an irregular heartbeat. Barkley had 27 points, 14 assists and 17 rebounds.

In Philadelphia, Allen Iverson had 26 points and career highs with nine assists and nine rebounds in his return to the lineup as the 76ers defeated the New York Knicks for the second time this season, 109-92.

Derrick Coleman scored 25 points and Jerry Stackhouse added 23 for the 76ers, who had lost their last two games — both without Iverson — and four of five. Iverson had missed the last three games with a slightly separated shoulder.

In Charlotte, Dell Curry scored 19 points and Anthony Mason added 18



Atlanta Hawk's forward Ken Norman (L) drives to the hoop against Toronto Raptor's guard Doug Christie during first half NBA action in Toronto (Reuters photo)

points and 11 rebounds as the Hornets snapped the Detroit Pistons' six-game winning streak, 93-85.

Detroit's Grant Hill left late in the first quarter after spraining his right wrist. X-rays were negative, but he did not return. Hill, who

leads the team in scoring, rebounding and assists, had four points and seven rebounds.

In Portland, Gary Trent scored 12 of his career-high

22 points in the first quarter as the Trail Blazers held the Denver Nuggets to their lowest total in NBA history, 105-65.

At Minnesota, Kevin Garnett scored seven of his season-high 24 points in a late fourth-quarter rally and blocked Darrick Martin's 14-foot off-balance jumper as time ran out to help the Timberwolves snap a three-game losing streak with a 98-96 victory over the Los Angeles Clippers.

In Toronto, Eldridge Recusner scored five of his career-high 23 points in the final 76 seconds, lifting the Atlanta Hawks to a 91-88 victory over the slumping Raptors.

At Indiana, Brian Shaw had a clutch three-pointer and two free throws in the final four minutes and the Orlando Magic held the Pacers to 10 points in the fourth quarter of a 76-73 victory.

In Milwaukee, Juwan Howard scored 23 points and Chris Webber added 20 and 15 rebounds as the Washington Bullets overcame a 12-point fourth-quarter deficit for a 91-87 victory over the Bucks.

At New Jersey, Kendall Gill scored 26 points and Robert Pack added 17 and a career-high 22 assists to power the Nets to a 114-91 romp over the Dallas Mavericks.

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Taleban launch massive assault north of Kabul

KABUL (Agencies) — The Taleban religious army said Sunday it wrested a strategic village north of Kabul from anti-Taleban troops in a massive counter-attack involving heavy artillery and jetfighters.

The Taleban said their troops captured Guldarah, about 16 kilometres north of the war-ravaged capital. The conquest of Guldarah was as much a psychological victory as a strategic one, driving anti-Taleban troops further away from the capital.

Taleban soldiers said there has been a heavy exchange of fire at the frontline, which has been shifting back and forth.

Civilians fleeing the fighting said Sunday that troops loyal to northern warlord General Rashid Dostum also have made some gains taking control of high ground northwest of the capital.

Throughout the night the sound of artillery shook Kabul, while on the deserted streets Taleban tanks and armoured vehicles rumbled towards the frontline to reinforce their comrades.

At dawn Taleban troops launched their counter offensive pushing their enemies out of Guldarah.

The official Radio Shariat of the Taleban also reported heavy fighting at the second front in western Afghanistan's Badkhis province, about 600 kilometres away from Kabul.

But the major frontline is

north of Kabul where the anti-Taleban alliance, led by Gen. Dostum and the ousted government, has been pushing at Taleban defences.

For the last month the frontline has remained static, despite numerous attempts by the opposition to push back the Taleban, who captured Kabul on Sept. 27.

Both sides were still exchanging heavy barrages of artillery and rockets on Sunday.

Taleban multi-barrelled rocket launchers were firing salvo after salvo of rockets towards the positions of the alliance forces while behind the frontlines, tank crew were cleaning shells in preparation for going up to the lines.

A steady trickle of families — their possessions loaded on to donkeys and wheelbarrows — moved south.

A shepherd who was also moving south with his livestock told Reuters: "This is the heaviest fighting I have seen since the Taleban were forced back (in mid-October)."

The Taleban have vowed to disarm other armed groups in Afghanistan and impose their puritanical vision of Islam on the whole country.

The Taleban have agreed in principle to the necessity of a ceasefire, but their demands are unlikely to be acceptable to their opposition.

Carbomb kills 5 in Algeria

ALGIERS (AFP) — Five people were killed and 15 injured when a car bomb exploded Sunday morning in Blida, south of the capital Algiers, the security services said in a statement.

The statement said the bomb went off at around 9:20 a.m. (0820 GMT) and added that rescue services had rushed to the spot to help the wounded.

The blast, four days before Algerians vote on changing the constitution, jolted Blida, said a statement from the security forces carried by the official Algerian news agency APS.

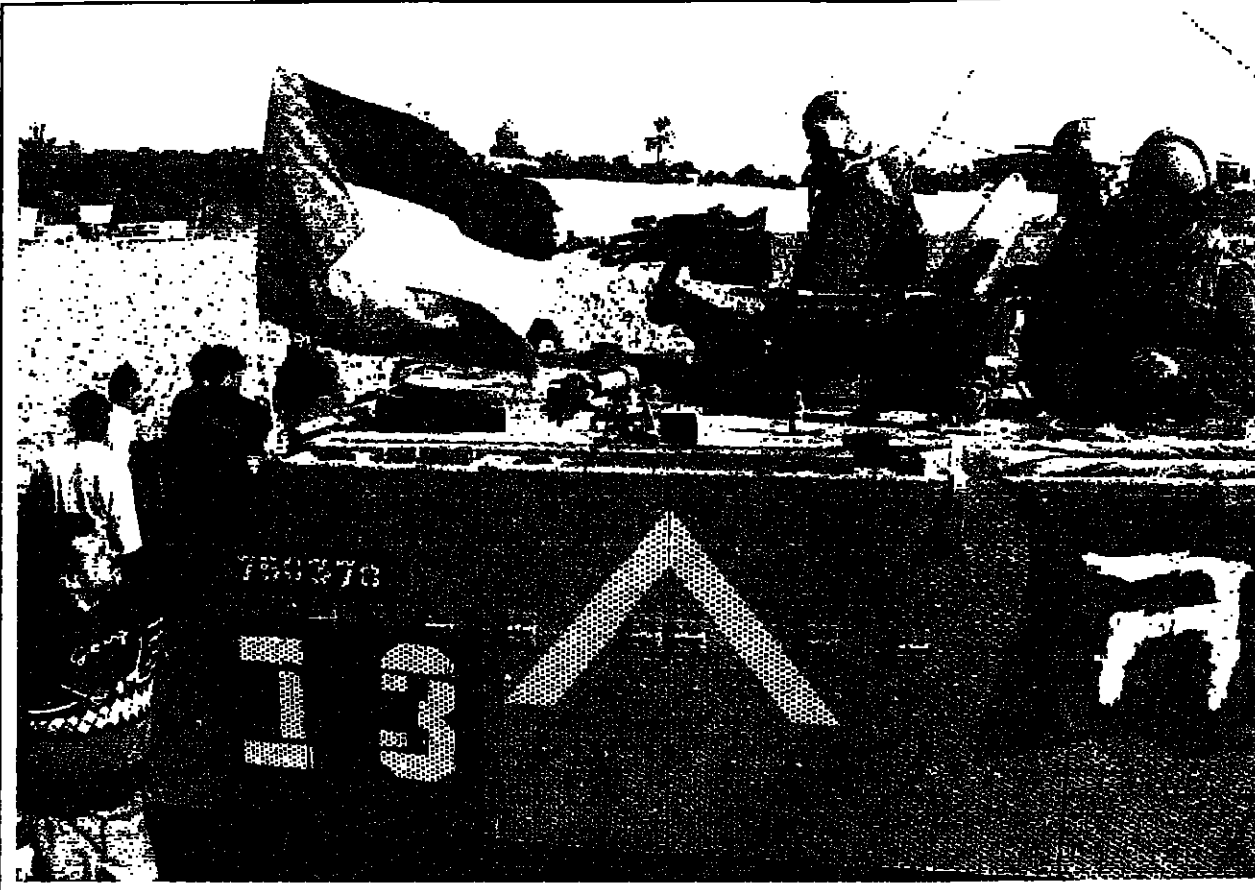
Residents, speaking by telephone from Blida, said the bomb went off outside a hotel where police officers usually reside.

"The five killed people were three men, a woman and a girl, all killed as they were passing by," one resident said.

The targeted hotel in downtown Blida was slightly damaged, said another resident. "The hotel was heavily protected by concrete blocks all around to prevent such a bomb attack," said the resident, who lives nearby.

Some neighbouring houses were also slightly damaged by fragments flying from the explosion, she said.

The explosion, the last in a spate of bombings in Blida and other towns elsewhere in Algeria during the past three years, went off at the centre of Blida known as Sahat Attout, residents said.



PROTEST: A Palestinian policeman (left) argues with an Israeli soldier stationed at a machine-gun on Sunday at an intersection in the Gaza Strip where hundreds of Palestinian motorists had blocked a road near the Jewish settlement of Netzarim (see story on page 1) (Reuters photo)

Kuwait ready to finance UNSCOM — Ekeus

KUWAIT CITY (AFP) — Kuwait has voiced readiness to help rescue the U.N. drive to disarm Iraq from running out of funds by the end of the year, U.N. envoy Rolf Ekeus said here Sunday during a tour of the Gulf.

"We have told the Security Council that by the end of the year we are very short and all our funds (will be) exhausted," Mr. Ekeus told reporters before leaving Kuwait for Saudi Arabia.

"That would mean that we would have to close our operations and with consequences that there would no longer be any control over Iraq," said the chairman of the U.N. Special Commission (UNSCOM) on disarmament.

Mr. Ekeus said he had the impression Kuwait "understood the situation very well and expressed in principle readiness to support" UNSCOM financially.

UNSCOM needs a budget of \$30 million a year for its efforts to disarm Iraq of weapons of mass destruction, including inspection

and monitoring missions.

It had hoped to benefit from the U.N. oil-for-food resolution which would allow Iraq to buy not only food and medicine but also defray U.N. costs, but the resolution has not been implemented yet.

"We have pointed out that if this oil-for-food Resolution 986 is not implemented, we will have problems," Mr. Ekeus said.

Mr. Ekeus said he had raised the financial problems during his visits to Washington, London and Paris and would discuss them further with Gulf Arab states before their Dec. 7-9 summit in Qatar.

Under U.N. resolutions ending the 1991 Gulf war to liberate Kuwait, Iraq must satisfy UNSCOM it has dismantled long-range missiles and weapons of mass destruction before the U.N. oil embargo can be lifted.

Oil and trade sanctions were imposed on Baghdad after it invaded Kuwait in August 1990.

In Baghdad, UNSCOM Deputy Chairman Charles Duelfer held more talks Sunday with Iraqi officials about a monitoring system aimed at ensuring Baghdad has stopped banned weapons programmes.

Mr. Ekeus said earlier that Baghdad had prevented the mission from transferring Scud missile parts outside Iraq for study and he is expected to discuss the issue during a visit to Iraq on Dec. 8-11.

Mr. Ekeus said on Sunday that Iraq had produced "some home-made Scud-type engines that were useless but we are afraid they have been mixed into this (1991-92) destruction and high-quality rocket engines were taken out and hidden."

"Our idea is to take out these rocket engines to bring them to laboratories for very careful detailed analysis of all components to see how many or if any further (engines) were hidden," he said.

Mr. Ekeus said U.N. teams were collecting debris earlier this month when "suddenly the Iraqi government blocked us."

He was earlier quoted as saying Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz blocked our team as they were trying to transport the missile parts to our centre in Baghdad after digging them out of the ground...What followed was a rather unpleasant exchange."

A senior U.N. official said last week that the U.N. planned to take the remains of missiles for study outside Iraq to help assess Baghdad's claims that all Scuds had been destroyed.

In 1992 Iraq gave the U.N. a list of hundreds of missiles, launch vehicles and other arms it said it had destroyed and buried in July 1991.

Terms of the ceasefire that ended the Gulf war ban Iraq from having missiles with a range larger than 150 kilometres and the means to produce them.

Mr. Ekeus has said Iraq was still concealing as many as 16 Scuds.

Large scope for expanding Turkish-Arab ties — scholar

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — There is large scope for consolidating Turkish-Arab relations in all spheres and efforts should also be exerted towards better understanding of Turkey among Arabs and vice-versa, a Turkish scholar said Sunday.

Ekmeladdin Insanogolu, one of the best known intellectuals in Turkey, also said despite differences with some Arab countries over specific issues Ankara always sought to maintain strong relations with the Arab World.

Professor Insanogolu, director-general of the Istanbul-based Research Centre for Islamic History, Art and Culture (IRCICA), noted that Turkey's relations with the Arab World dated back to centuries and it shared common interests with the Arabs.

The professor was delivering a lecture on "Turkish-Arab Relations: Present Status and Future Prospects" at the Institute of Diplomacy, where he also attended the annual meeting

of the IRCICA board of directors which was opened by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, on Saturday.

Prof. Insanogolu said his country had scored major achievements in industry and agriculture, an experience that could benefit Arab countries if they sought to cooperate with Turkey.

He pointed out that about 80 per cent of Turkey's exports were industrial products.

Similarly, the Arab countries could also strengthen cooperation with Turkey and benefit from that country's achievements in education and experience in socio-economic development, he said.

On the political front, Prof. Insanogolu declined direct comment on current political developments in Turkey, but said that despite the differences in political ideologies between Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan, an Islamist, and Deputy Prime Minister Tansu Ciller, a pro-Western conservative, the government was functioning well

because of the national interests of the country.

Replying to questions from the audience, Prof. Insanogolu, stressing that he was voicing his personal opinion rather than stating government policy, said he did not feel that an agreement between Turkey and Israel on cooperation in military-related issues was targeted at anybody. The agreement, he said, was part of Turkey's defence strategy.

The professor also pointed out that Turkey had always been a strong supporter of Arab causes, particularly the Palestinian struggle against Israel and had spoken up against Israeli practices in the occupied territories at regional and international forums.

He conceded that Turkey had problems with Syria and Iraq over water from the Euphrates River. He said internal considerations had prompted his country to undertake water projects within its own territory, but he stressed that at no point did Turkey stop the flow of the Euphrates down to Syria and Iraq.

FBI chief holds talks in Riyadh

RIYADH (AFP) — Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Director Louis Freeh is meeting with senior Saudi officials to discuss the probe into the June 25 bombing at a U.S. military housing complex that killed 19 Americans.

Mr. Freeh held talks with Saudi officials on Saturday and would hold more "to update himself on the course of the investigation" before he returned to Washington later Sunday, spokesman Samir Koutab said.

Neither U.S. nor Saudi officials identified the senior Saudi officials who held talks with Mr. Freeh.

Iran police block anti-German rally

TEHRAN (AP) — Iranian security forces prevented protesters from staging a rally outside the German embassy on Sunday amid government efforts to control diplomatic damage from a terrorism row with Germany.

Police formed a chain around the embassy compound, which was surrounded by buses and trucks to stop the 2,000 demonstrators shouting "death to America" and "death to Israel," the usual slogans of any protest in Iran.

Accusations by German federal prosecutors earlier this month that Iranian leaders had ordered the 1992 assassinations of dissidents in Berlin unleashed a storm of protests.

At first, Iranian government officials demanded that ties with Germany be severed and sanctioned several large demonstrations at the German embassy.

But more recently, Iranian leaders have been trying to prevent relations with the country's largest Western trade partner from worsening.

Taking a conciliatory tone, President Hashemi Rafsanjani said Friday that his country was sure the Bonn government was not behind the accusations.

"We still believe that the German govern-

ment's policy has nothing to do with the court's action," Mr. Rafsanjani told Friday worshippers.

"We should not forget that the German government is under the pressure of the United States and Israel," he said.

Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati told reporters in Tehran on Saturday that a letter from German Chancellor Helmut Kohl to Mr. Rafsanjani appealing for calm had been "very positive."

German prosecutors have recommended that Kazem Darabi, an alleged member of the Iranian intelligence, and another suspect be sentenced to life in prison for the Sept. 1992 killings in Berlin of a Kurdish opposition leader and three aides.

In March, German prosecutors issued an arrest warrant for Iran's intelligence chief, Ali Fallahiyani, on charges that he ordered the assassinations.

On Thursday, German prosecutors said they would wait until the Berlin verdict, expected in January, to decide whether to open a case against Mr. Rafsanjani and Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Iran's top religious and political authority.

Survivors recount terror aboard crashed Ethiopian plane

MORONI (AP) — Passengers screamed, cried and prayed as the pilot of an Ethiopian jetliner, its engines silenced by a lack of fuel, struggled with hijackers to push the plane down in the sea.

Ethiopian Airlines Flight 961 crash landed and broke apart in the Indian Ocean on Saturday just off the beach at resort hotel on Grand Comore Island.

Co-pilot Yonas Mekuria said the pilot, Captain Leul Abate, pleaded with the hijackers to let him land at nearby Moroni, the capital of the Comoros Islands, because the aircraft was running out of fuel. But the hijackers refused.

"I guess they understood it, but they didn't give a damn," said Mr. Mekuria, who was hospitalised Sunday in Moroni with

minor injuries.

As the engines died, Capt. Abate tried to put the plane down in the sea, just short of the beach. Witnesses said one wing touched first, then the plane hit and bounced several times and broke apart spewing some passengers into the sea and filling with water.

Island residents and tourists plunged into the rough sea to help the victims, saving 55. The other 120 people aboard the aircraft were feared dead.

The three hijackers, who claimed to have a bomb, commandeered the aircraft shortly after takeoff from Addis Ababa, the Ethiopian capital. Their single demand was to fly to Australia.

Bisrat Alemu, an Ethiopian passenger, said the hijackers began yelling and running up the aisle,

pushing aside flight attendants and storming into the cockpit.

Mr. Mekuria, the co-pilot, said they beat him up and forced him out into the passenger section of the plane.

He said three were armed with something they said was a bomb, an axe and a fire extinguisher. One also carried and drank liberally from a 12-year-old bottle of Scotch looted from the duty-free cart.

Once they took control, the hijackers made an announcement on the jet's intercom in Amharic, the Ethiopian language.

"They said, 'we escaped from prison. We are against the government. We are hijacking the plane. We have an explosive. If anybody moves, we'll explode it,'" said Mr. Bisrat.

After that announcement,

a passenger from Djibouti told Radio France International in Paris that the hijackers did not speak to the passengers again for three hours.

"They forbade us from even eating and drinking for the three hours," said the passenger. He said later they told the passengers to take the life vests out and attach them to their seat belts. "A quarter of an hour later, boom! We fell into the sea."

Mr. Mekuria said as the plane ran low on fuel, the pilot pleaded with them to allow him to land in Moroni.

"He wanted to go there but they wouldn't let him," said Mr. Mekuria. "It was pretty bizarre. I didn't know what they were doing. They were interfering with procedures, grabbing at the instruments. They snatched the radio from the jack."

In his last message to the passengers, the pilot said he had lost one engine and the other would fail soon. He told them he would ditch in the sea and to prepare for a crash landing.

"People were screaming, some were praying," said Mr. Bisrat, the Ethiopian passenger.

Mr. Mekuria said at this time he pushed his way back into the cabin, telling the hijackers that there was a lot to do and he had to help abate ditch the aircraft. He said the hijackers were still struggling with abate and grabbing the instruments.

"They were messing with him," said Mr. Mekuria. "One had a few drinks, he had the bottle in his hand."

The U.S. consul-general in Bombay, Frank Huddle, and his wife, Shania, were among the survivors.

"This is a case study of why the United States takes a hardline on terrorism," Mr. Huddle said Sunday from his hospital bed, where he is recovering from deep cuts on his legs and feet.

Mr. Huddle said when the pilot brought the plane down it hit once and then bounced four times before breaking up. "The first bump was really gentle. The second one was really hard. The third one was even harder, like (an) auto accident. The last one was like an earthquake," said Mr. Huddle, who said he thought he was going to die.

Alphonso Dala, a Nigerian passenger, said after the plane hit it seemed to turn upside down.

"After it hit the first time, it went up the air upside down. I felt myself turning. Then there was a big bang

and I was in the water. I was in my seat in the water," said Mr. Dala, who was not injured.

"We knew we were going to land in the sea. We already knew that we were going to die," said N.B. Surti of Bombay. He said the plane quickly filled with water.

"Five or six times I went up and down in the water. I wanted very much to survive. I fought through all the bodies and everything and grabbed a broken part of the plane," said Mr. Surti. "Slowly, slowly I came out."

Mr. Mekuria said after the crash landing he pulled the injured pilot out of the cockpit and stayed with him in the water until they were rescued. Two of the hijackers were arrested. The third is presumed dead.

Blair confesses he is a failed rocker

LONDON (R) — British Labour Party leader Tony Blair, once the lead singer for a student rock band but now hoping to be the next prime minister, has confessed he could never sing.

Mr. Blair, frontman at Oxford University for the Ugly Rumours Band, said: "I had a great time doing it. I love rock music and I think that within everyone of my generation there's an aspiring lead singer waiting to get out." But when asked in a BBC radio show if he could sing, he said: "If I was to be completely truthful, not very well, no."

APEC promise tease for Manila's dancers

MANILA (R) — To Bill Clinton and other Asia-Pacific leaders, the APEC summit in the Philippines means business but to Kim Padilla and hundreds of other striptease dancers in Manila's nightclub row, APEC is no business at all.

Wild duck should have been a full house on a weekend night. But the place was barely half filled and Kim and other dancers were twiddling their thumbs wondering when their regular customers would show up and buy drinks. "I am not happy with APEC. Before, we had a lot of customers, all the girls have customers, but now over half of the girls don't have customers," the 20-year old said. "No customer, no income."

Cuban diver seeks to break record

CABO SAN LUCAS (R) — In the universe of breathhold diving, the spotlight falls on Pipin Ferreras on Sunday, when he attempts to set a world record by going down into the water 135 metres while holding his breath.

Ferreras takes a "because it's there" attitude to his unusual livelihood, in which he makes his money from corporate sponsorships. At a news conference, he likened it to a bull fight, where sometimes the bullfighter wins, and sometimes the bull wins. "Why do people propose going to Mars?" said Ferreras, 34.

Crocodile filets tempt meat-loving Britons

LONDON (R) — Crocodile meat will be on sale for the first time this week in British supermarkets, joining ostrich and buffalo in an exotic range of fare tempting shoppers away from traditional beef and lamb. Supermarket chain Sainsbury's said it was buying crocodile filets from Australia for sale as an experiment in seven of its stores. "We already sell buffalo and ostrich. People are getting more adventurous in their tastes," a spokeswoman said. British meat lovers have turned increasingly to unusual alternatives to beef steaks following the scare over mad cow disease and its possible link to the fatal human brain-wasting condition Creutzfeldt Jakob disease.

Japanese wins world violin competition

PARIS (AFP) — A 17-year-old teenager Diashin Kashimoto has won the top international music competition the Marguerite Long-Jacques Thibaud this year chaired by Yehudi Menuhin. The teenager is only the second Japanese to win the first prize since the competition was launched in 1943, as the awards were often scooped by Soviet violinists.

Kashimoto, who was given a standing ovation in the final renditions, wins 150,000 francs (\$30,000), after also winning six other competition categories.

Lept denies threatening Sudanese

Khartoum (AFP) — Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak denied reports of threatening Sudanese students saying "lies" and "undermining" the government.

The Egyptian daily Al-Ahram said Mubarak had been misled by a "misleading" report. "The Egyptian government is not threatening Sudanese students," he said.

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